

AUROBINDO GANDHI & ROY

A YOGI
A MAHATMA
AND
A RATIONALIST

38
Niranjan Dhar

3903
13.3-87

ROBINSON, DANIEL AND ROY

AUROBINDO, GANDHI AND ROY

AUROBINDO, GANDHI AND ROY

A Yogi, A Mahatma and a Rationalist

Niranjan Dhar



MINERVA

INDIA



MINERVA ASSOCIATES (PUBLICATIONS) PVT. LTD.
7-B, Lake Place : Calcutta-700 029

AND ROY

A. Yogi A. Mahalingam and A. Ramanathan

First published : June, 1986

© Niranjana Dhar, 1986

S.C.E. West Bengal

Date 13-3-87

Acc No. 3908

199.54

DHA



Printed by Madan Mohan Dey at Diamond Printers, 275A, Kalighat Road, Calcutta-700 026 and published by T. K. Mukherjee on behalf of Minerva Associates (Publications) Pvt. Ltd., 7-B, Lake Place, Calcutta-700 029.

PREFACE

THE PRESENT work is a continuation study of my earlier one *Vedanta and Bengal Renaissance*. It has been noticed there that the *Isvarvadi* Vedanta which enjoys almost unstinted support of the indigenous vested interests has proved to be an inveterate enemy of the *svabhavavadi* rational thought-currents and played havoc with them in different ages. Then coming to the modern India we also find the history repeating itself once again. It is the 19th century which has inaugurated the modern age in India when a secular rationalist movement akin to the European Renaissance blossomed forth here largely under the impact of the modern Western ideas being pumped into our body politic through the newly introduced English education. But it too was cut short by an aggressive Vedantic movement successively led by the Brahmo Samaj and the Ramakrishna Order.

In our present book the 20th century has been covered. On making a debut on the Indian socio-political scene after a long absence, M. N. Roy, one of the foremost rationalist thinkers of our age, proceeded to accomplish the unfinished intellectual task of the 19th century and started afresh a comprehensive Renaissance-cum-humanist movement with a view to delivering the Indian mind from the traditional grip of the religious mode of thought. In this task, however, he had to contend with a strong religious offensive being carried on by Gandhi, on the one side, who represented the theoretical side of the Vedanta and by Aurobindo, on the other, who professed to have gone beyond religion but actually represented the technical side (yoga) of the Vedanta. For all practical purposes the Vedantic onslaught never allowed the socio-intellectual movement launched by Roy to get the better of it.

The redemption of the country, however, lies in the triumph of the secular rationalist ideas of Roy. In this overall comparative study - the first of its kind - of the three contemporary thought-leaders we have therefore generally upheld the views

of Roy. In that case, since the year of the publication of the book coincides with that of the centenary birth anniversary of Roy, the book should be taken as a humble tribute to his sacred memory from its author and publishers.

But since, with a view to bringing about this coincidence, the book has to be hastily seen through the press, a few unhappy printing mistakes have inadvertently crept in it. We, however, hope to rectify them in its next edition.

Calcutta,
June, 1986

Niranjan Dhar

CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
PREFACE	V
I. Indian Independence	1
Gandhi	4
Roy	5
II. Post-Independence Issues : Man Vs Institutions	8
III. Socio-Philosophical Thought	14
(A) Human Aspect	
a) World-View of Gandhi	14
Ethical Thought	23
b) World-View of Aurobindo	27
Ethical Thought	34
Shape of the Superman to come	35
c) World-View of Roy	41
IV. Role of Man in History	59
Aurobindo	63
Gandhi	66
(B) Institutional Aspect	68
a) Social Thought of Aurobindo	69
b) Social Thought of Gandhi	82
Economic Thought	83
c) Socio-Political Thought of Roy	103
Economic Thought	118
V. World Situation and World Institutions	128
The Confrontation	130
APPENDICES :	
A. Yoga and Human Anatomy	142
B. M. N. Roy's Place in Indian Tradition	151
C. Radical Humanism, Marxism and Svabhavavad	155
D. Sociology of Partyless Democracy	159
SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY	166
INDEX	174

CHAPTER—I

INDIAN INDEPENDENCE

“REVOLUTION”, said Carlyle, “always starts in the minds of best men”. The dawn of the 20th century saw the radicalisation of our national life. To win the freedom of the country became now the overriding consideration of our idealistic intellectuals of whom Aurobindo, Gandhi and M. N. Roy were the most original thinkers. They looked at the Indian problem from three different points of view and made some important contributions to the domain of the socio-philosophical thought of the world.

The freedom struggle of the country thus constituted the situational context in which the social thought of our three eminent leaders began to take shape. Just as during the medieval period the conflict between the Pope and the Emperor and subsequently between the King and the Parliament provided material for the socio-political thought of contemporary Europe, so did in modern India the struggle between the British imperialist power and the Indian people. But while the European struggles were fought almost exclusively over the question of determining the centre of the gravity of political power, the main issue involved in the Indian struggle was not so much the determination of the location of power as the method of winning it. An interesting development thus took place over the question of applying physical, moral or spiritual force for achieving the freedom of the country.

Aurobindo (1872-1950) came to the Indian political scene much earlier than Gandhi (1869-1948) and Roy (1887-1954). He was the mastermind wherefrom emanated most of the governing ideas of the Indian nationalist movement and acted as the precursor of both Gandhi and Roy. Moderate politicians then ruled the Indian politics. Aurobindo ridiculed it and pleaded for extremist politics. The battle of freedom was *yajna* as well as a *dharmayuddha* to him. So no means should be spared to

consummate and win it. The emancipation of India was a yajna because liberty was the fruit sought from it and the Motherland was the goddess to whom the sacrifice was being offered. The British *rakshasas* wanted to interfere with the successful consummation of the sacrifice. So the *Brahmateja* (spiritual force) had to be applied to drive them away. In extreme cases, of course, the Kshatriya strength (physical force) had to be requisitioned to supplement the *Brahmateja*. The requisition of the Kshatriya strength was all the more justified because the freedom struggle also partook of the nature of a *dharmayuddha*. The Hindus raised the war to the level of a highly meritorious form of activity, and no ruler except Asoka exhibited any aversion to war on ethical grounds. Aurobindo thus derived the support for his double strategy from the practice of ancient India.

In the hands of Aurobindo the application of moral force took the shape of a full-scale non-violent non-cooperation and passive resistance movement on the occasion of the Bengal Partition Movement in 1906. What was at first only a protest movement against the Partition soon developed into a broader movement of swadeshi and swaraj under his inspiration. Aurobindo laid the theoretical basis of this new movement in a series of articles in the *Bande Mataram* under the caption 'Doctrine of Passive Resistance'. The comprehensive boycott movement was simultaneously "backed up by the positive development of alternatives". In the Swadeshi movement of Bengal Aurobindo anticipated not only Gandhi's technique of struggle but also his Constructive Programme in toto¹. To a very large extent therefore Aurobindo served as a precursor of Gandhi. He preceded even the Gandhi of South Africa².

Side by side with the passive resistance movement Aurobindo, as we have already seen, felt the necessity of an aggressive resistance movement culminating in an armed insurrection—a *dharmayuddha* per excellence³. In one of his essays on passive resistance in the *Bande Mataram* he spoke of keeping the door "ajar" for violent method in case the Government stepped up repression beyond a certain point making the practice of passive resistance impossible. So under the cover of open Congress politics Aurobindo sought to build up an underground revolu-

tionary movement through his two emissaries — Barin Ghosh and Jatin Banerjee. Roy was inducted into it during his student days.⁴ Aurobindo thus prepared the ground for the advent of Roy too on the Indian political scene.

The mighty Swadeshi movement which started so promisingly and declared proudly that the Swadeshi must end in the Swaraj began to peter out soon. A misdirected bomb-attack on two European ladies by two of the revolutionary followers of Aurobindo on 30th April, 1908 set the police on the track. The source of the conspiracy was found and rooted out. Aurobindo himself was clapped in prison on 2nd May, 1908. Thereafter, both his passive and aggressive resistance movements came to an ignoble end.

After one year Aurobindo came out of jail a completely changed man. An essentially religious personality that he was, the jail-life had given him more solitude to meditate. He had now lost all interest in his former two-fold strategy and opted for a third way. At this stage he decided to win the freedom of the country with the help of his yogic power and with the help of God who was more powerful than any earthly power.⁵ He shifted to Pondicherry where he became a whole-time yogi. All the efforts made by the nationalist leaders to persuade him to return to the mainstream of Indian politics failed.

As we shall see later on, the belief that the yoga practice is conducive to the acquisition of extraordinary powers to perform extraordinary feats is a remnant of the ancient magical thought-process. The Indians have been practising it for thousands of years but the practical outcome has been nil. But national prejudices die hard. The faith in yoga therefore still persists among many Indians. Obviously Aurobindo was a victim to this national prejudice. His credulous disciples thus come to believe that it was Aurobindo who was instrumental in achieving the independence of the country. He supported the war-efforts of the Government from the beginning of the Second World War, but he applied his yogic power behind the Allied Powers only when the Dunkirk debacle took place. That is why henceforward the tide of the War turned in their favour, and there occurred a peaceful transference of power to the

Indian hands. The disciples think it to be very significant that the transference of power took place on a 15th August which also happened to be the birth-day of their Master. In the meantime, of course, Aurobindo's purpose of practising yoga had expanded in scope. It was no longer the mere liberation of the country. It was the liberation of humanity.

GANDHI

Gandhi, who left India for South Africa in 1893 - the year in which Aurobindo returned to India, came back to his country at the starting of the First World War. The war had given a fresh spurt to the "terroristic" activities. The people were also generally opposed to the British war efforts. So at the instance of the nervous British Government C. F. Andrews and some of the trusted Indian moderate leaders took the initiative to bring back Gandhi to counter-act the violent anti-British and anti-War activities of the people.⁶

On returning to India, Gandhi filled the void created by the withdrawal of Aurobindo from the active political life and took up the thread from where it was left by the latter. If Aurobindo led only one non-violent resistance movement, Gandhi led as many as three or, we may say, four so far as his career in India was a mere continuation of that in South Africa. But the three non-cooperation movements led by Gandhi in India cannot be said to have been more successful than that led by him in South Africa or that led earlier in Bengal by Aurobindo. These three Gandhian movements at best helped a group of Indian capitalists and their political mouthpieces to get some economic and political concessions from the Government. And so far as South Africa is concerned, we cannot say that Gandhi was more successful for the apartheid policy is still being pursued by the local Government with full force.

India obtained independence in the wake of the Second World War. This had misled many to believe the interested propaganda of the Congress Government that it was the 'Quit India' movement of Gandhi which has worked the miracle. They have generally refused to see that the 'Quit India' movement

could not create any compulsion for the Government to relinquish full power because the movement as well the Congress organisation were completely killed by the Government. That is why Attlee, the Prime Minister of Great Britain under whose auspices the transference of power took place, observed in India that the pressure exerted by Gandhi on the British Government to part with power was "nominal". He emphasised the word 'nominal'.⁷ In fact, vested interests, both native and foreign alike, have all along dramatised the Gandhian movements to prevent the growth of left forces in the country.⁸

Anyhow, the Congress fear proved to be totally unfounded that the British victory in the War would immensely strengthen the Government so that after the termination of the War it would be practically impossible to force it to quit. It should be noted further in this connection that in the wake of the Second World War transference of power took place not only in India but in *all* the British colonies of Asia and Africa. In some of these colonies again there was no pressure at all upon the Britishers to quit and in some others the indigenous people even wanted the British Government to stay. What is the explanation of this queer phenomenon?

ROY

The explanation can be found in the decolonisation theory of Roy over which he came to join issue with the "great" Lenin at the Second Congress of the Communist International held in Moscow in 1920.

In pursuance of an Indo-German Plot hatched on the outbreak of the First World War, Roy went abroad in search of arms and had his "rebirth" in Mexico after going through the revolutionary literature of Europe.⁹ He now wanted to organise the conscious will of the Indian people for freedom in the form of a parallel state machinery. Roy was, however, aware that this revolutionary task would not be performed under the Gandhian leadership. This leadership represented the interest of the Indian capitalists who had come into junior partnership with the British capitalists during the Post-War period. A war fought on the

scale of the First World War was so much destructive that the economy of even the victorious power could not but remain highly impaired. The post-war Britain lacked in adequate surplus capital to export. So it was willy-nilly forced to give some scope to Indian capital for investment in Indian industries, and actually the War had already helped a limited growth of Indian capitalism. The Indian capitalists were therefore no longer interested in an all-out struggle for freedom which was likely to go beyond their control. They would rather now like to apply occasional pressures upon the Government for getting progressive doses of concession. The Gandhian technique of struggle would thus serve their purpose best, and that is why they began starting financing all the Gandhian activities.¹⁰ Roy therefore gave the slogan of *alternative leadership*.

The Second World War, however, opened a new vista before the Indian people by *accelerating* the decolonisation process which had started with the First World War. The War converted Britain from a creditor country to a debtor country, and the Britishers had to sell shares in Indian industries, etc. for financing the war efforts. Roy who was the most uncompromising enemy of British imperialism visualised that the economic hold of the 'home' country upon its colonies would thus be correspondingly loosened leading to the transference of political power to the indigenous Governments of the colonies. Long before the termination of the war he could thus predict that in the wake of the War power would be transferred to India also as a part of the decolonisation process and brought out a Draft Constitution and a People's Plan as the political and economic blue-prints of free India. He was "the man who looked ahead" and fully cooperated with the Allied War efforts. Although Roy incurred much displeasure of the short-sighted nationalist circle by his War support, history has vindicated him. Now to oppose where he should cooperate would have amounted to a treason against the motherland. Here we should also point out that Roy's support to the Allied War efforts was prompted by his anti-Fascist stand as well.

How India has won independence is, however, only of academic interest now. It is no longer a burning issue, and we

may skip over to the subsequent development of more abiding interest.

NOTES

- 1 For a comprehensive study of this aspect of the Swadeshi movement see Sumit Sarkar's *Bengal Swadeshi Movement*.
2. Gandhi first spoke of passive resistance in July, 1907. But Aurobindo indicated his new technique of swaraj-swadesti-boycott in his series published in the *Indu Prakash* as early as August, 1893. He is also reported to have divulged his plan of passive resistance to Jatin Mukherji in 1903 — Samaren Roy's *Restless Brahmin*, p. 32.
- 3 "The essential difference between passive or defensive and active or aggressive resistance is that while the method of the aggressive resister is to do something by which he can do positive harm to the Government, the method of the passive resister is to abstain from doing something by which he would be helping the Government. The object in both cases is the same - to force the hands of the Government ; the line of attack is different " — Aurobindo's *Doctrine of Passive Resistance*, p. 35.
- 4 *Sisir Mitra's Resurgent India*, p. 367.
5. See the author's article "Aurobindo's Yoga-Politics" in *The Radical Humanist* for October, 1977.
6. Ashutosh Lahiry's *Gandhi in Indian Politics*, p. 173.
7. *Lokswaraj* dated 15th October, 1980, p. 8.
R. C. Majumder also confirmed it.
- 8 Birla's letter to Samuel dated 14th March, 1932 and Birla's letter to Bapu dated 29th June, 1935 published in G. D. Birla's *Under the Shadow of the Mahatma*, pp. 62 and 162.
- 9 *Roy's Memoirs*, p. 212.
- 10 *Roy's India in Transition ; Our Differences ; The Future of Indian Politics ; India and War*, etc.

CHAPTER—II

POST-INDEPENDENCE ISSUE : MAN Vs. INSTITUTIONS

NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE was only the necessary beginning towards other goals. With a characteristic prophetic vision each of our three national leaders—Aurobindo, Gandhi and Roy—had therefore to think a good deal about the shape of things to come in the free India : Should the country merely copy the advanced Western countries and travel their beaten track ? Is everything alright with the western civilisation ? If not, should not India blaze a new trail ? All these questions came to agitate the minds of our three nation-builders, and each of them tried in his own way to give answer to them. But they thought about the future of India only as a part of the future of mankind ; and while going to do that, they had, for all practical purposes, to rethink the future of humanity. In other words, they were imbued with a sense of mission that they had something worthwhile to contribute towards the enrichment of humanity and that a successful India would serve as a model for other nations to follow.

The modern age was virtually ushered in the world by the national bourgeoisie of Europe after liquidating the feudal order. More than one and half century ago, Saint-Simon popularised the word 'industrialism' to designate the emergent society. There was a striking note of optimism in the air, and human progress came to be identified with the technological progress. As a mark of triumph of the new society Saint-Simon even went to the extent of requisitioning the service of Rouget de l'Isle, the composer of the Marseillaise, to write a new "industrial Marseillaise" which was actually sung on the occasion of the opening of a textile factory at Saint Ouen. It is true that the process of industrialisation entailed a good deal of toil and tear but it was then argued that we were only at the beginning of the technological development and these painful experiences should be taken only as the teething troubles of a basically sound process. They would disappear in course of its further development.

This optimistic outlook about the modern technological civilisation has, however, proved to be rather naive. Man invented technology to satisfy his needs more adequately. But, in course of time, we have been the victims of a development whereby technology has gained at the cost of man. Huge and costly machineries to-day mass-produce goods primarily for the market so that the exchange-value of a thing has largely replaced its use-value. Necessity is no longer the mother of invention, wants being mostly created artificially through giant advertising machineries. As a result, there is an ever-intensifying over-consumption of more or less unwanted goods. All this is not in the interest of man but of the machine which keeps on moving inexorably on its own momentum. The "consumer mentality" is encouraging man to think more in terms of *having* than of *being*. Above all, man himself is regarded as human capital, and he has become an alien in the world created by him.

At the beginning opposition to the technological development came mainly from those who saw in it a threat to their livelihood because of a change in the traditional mode of production. The threatened workmen gave vent to their hostility by breaking the new machineries. To-day, however, this opposition was dictated not so much by economic, as by spiritual, considerations.

Tools designed by the primitive man were specialised extrapolations of man's own organs for pushing, pounding, plucking, etc., all of which were basic motor activities of man. This technology has been characterised as biotechnics or technology of the body. But with the application of science in the art of living man's technological world has undergone a radical change. This has heralded the advent of the machine age in the annals of human civilisation. From a tool-using animal man has, however, now turned to be machine-serving one. Technology is thus transformed from an extension of man into a force *above* man. The pioneers of the machine age failed to see that machinery must not only accomplish a limited mechanical task but fulfil certain biological, psychological and sociological requirements as well.

Modern technology has not developed naturally out of local technologies. It on its own constitutes a distinct body of

knowledge with hardly any link with the preceding technologies. The new technology has been created mainly by the bourgeoisie in its mad drive for making more and more money. The productive interests of society like physicists, chemists, engineers and technicians dedicate themselves to the cause of knowing the secrets of nature and utilising the knowledge for the benefit of mankind. Opposed to them are the pecuniary interests primarily addicted to making money. They always seek to turn the productive system into one which would add to their personal profit, one man's scientific discovery being the basis for another's technological development at a different time and place¹.

Researches in applied science are ordinarily far more expensive than those in basic sciences. In some European countries a good deal of finance had concentrated in the hands of a few individuals before the birth of modern science. Land and its natural resources were under the monopoly control of some landlords there for long. Some families of those countries had also made tons of money by plundering their Asian and African colonies. The more enterprising among them started financing applied science and harnessed the new discoveries to the promotion of mass production and mass distribution. They saw that in this way they could reap maximum profits. Later on, economic organisations of still larger scale were made possible by the laws of limited liability.

The new technology bears all the marks of its origin, it being a technology of the few at the cost of the many. Not merely its owners are rich people. Its operation too favours the same class. This technology is highly complicated, and its operation is dependent upon a specially trained elite. The acquisition of this technical knowledge is also very expensive. So it generally remains beyond the capacity of ordinary people to acquire it. The argument that the new technology will promote economic growth and enable everyone to get a bigger share of the economic cake has also proved to be wrong in practice. The centralised technology necessarily leads to the centralisation of wealth. Furthermore, the contemporary technology entails a huge, even if largely hidden, social cost in overpopulation, etc. Workers who are often compelled to live in the slums of their respective

factories find it impossible to control the environment.

Man's position to-day in the economic sphere is like that of the German sorcerer's apprentice who looked out with horror at the forces which he had released but could not control. This, we shall see now, applies to his political life also.

The new technology further demands an appropriate system—a system that suits it. The essence of this system is gigantism. Big business must be accompanied by big government. The driving force behind the trend towards big political units was also the same class—the bourgeoisie. The nation-state displaced the older local or personal loyalties of the feudal and dynastic era and created a public order over an extensive area facilitating trade and commerce. At the same time it assured a large home market for the manufactures of the newly established factories. The novel concept of nationalism further helped the consolidation of the nation-state.

In a world where nationalism is taken for granted and where the values of nationalism are rated to be supreme, the nation has been made the mould and measure of the state. Its course has been marked with material and moral ruin. The material ruin wrought by applied science in the service of nationalism is immense. As nationalists men of science have thought **themselves as duty-bound** to produce very destructive weapons to promote the interest of the bourgeoisie and the ruling minority. Nationalism is also a moral ruin because it smothers individual freedom and denies the value of the human being as **a human being**.

It is true, as has been pointed out by Aldous Huxley, that the modern world differs from ancient Greece only in degree and scale and not in kind. If Athens and Sparta died of "separatist patriotism", so also we are indulging in jingoism and flag waving. But whereas the technology at the service of the Greek nationalities did not go beyond chariots and javelins, the technology at the disposal of our nation-states has given us a far more devastating instruments of slaughter. To-day there is a military-industrial complex in which we find a coincidence of interest between those who control the major means of production and those who control the state-machinery. A narrow

range of interests thus determines the national policy in major domestic and foreign affairs.

Such manipulation by vested interests becomes possible for large productive and territorial units are not amenable to effective popular control. Socialism of course poses to transfer the ownership of the productive units from the few private hands to the state in the name of the nation or the people. But such transfer of ownership is only formal. It does not give the people access to the seats of power and control in the nationalised units. And it is a lesson of history that exclusion from power amounts to the exclusion of benefits as well. Under Socialism those bureaucrats who are placed in charge of the management appropriate all the benefits from the units albeit they do not own them legally. Formalities do not always reflect the substance of things. During the medieval period the upper clergy too did not own the land but they were more prosperous than even the noblemen because they controlled the church organisations which had titles to property².

Similarly in a nation-state it is not enough that the persons running the government are elected by the people. After the electoral process is over, the electorates have no *standing* control over their representatives. In the absence of this control those who are in the seats of power derive all the advantages from their positions.

Moreover, the spirit of alienation has not failed to invade the larger social life of man also. Man is not merely a social animal. He is a community animal. Paleolithic hunters and neolithic farmers used to live in small groups occupying a limited territory and had very few contacts with other human groups. These have created our mental propensities. So we find to-day that even with the development of modern means of communication the range of our meaningful relationships has not expanded much, it being determined not so much by mechanical inventions as by biological limitations. A social life can be built up on the impersonal cooperation of different individuals over a large area but a community life requires direct and face-to-face communication. But the compactness of the old society is now gone, and what is passing as

society is more or less only an agglomeration of individuals. Our neighbours are no better than mere nigh-dwellers. The individual man has been leading a lone and lorn life, and within his heart of hearts he is sick. Deprived of the natural satisfaction from day-to-day social communication and cooperation, he is apt to do any mad thing. He may not even hesitate to submit to a tyrant to get rid of his terrible burden of impersonal freedom³.

Human civilisation is thus passing through a crisis. The social institutions created by man to serve his ends have gone beyond his control as a result of which his very existence is now threatened. These institutions do not also satisfy his genuine social and psychological needs. The contemporary civilisation therefore requires a major re-orientation and re-organisation. All our three leaders have keenly responded to the crisis. Their diagnosis is common but their prescriptions differ widely.

Present crisis emanates basically from the fact that man has lost his control over his institutions. It has two facets—one is human and other is institutional. To enable man to recover his lost identity and regain his control over his institutions man must be strengthened and the institutions weakened. We therefore propose to study the socio-philosophical thought of the three Indian thinkers under two heads—(A) Human aspect and (B) Institutional Aspect.

NOTES

1. *Veblen's Theory of Leisure Class*.
See also the author's article "Economic Aspects of New Humanism" in *Radical Humanist* for July, 1974.
2. See the author's article "The Fad and the Fallacy" in *Industrial and Engineering Annual*, 1970; also his article "Ownership and Control" in *Swarejya* dated 12th October, 1968.
3. See the author's *Social Education*, p. 63.

CHAPTER—III

SOCIO-PHILOSOPHICAL THOUGHT

(A) HUMAN ASPECT

A MAN is what he thinks. The human aspect of the prescription for resolution of the crisis of human civilisation consists in reinforcing the confidence of man in himself and establishing his sovereignty in human affairs. He must be shown to possess all the powers and capacities needed for the purpose. That is to say, man must be depicted to be great and he must be imbued with the will to fulfil all his potentialities. Man's subservience to any external force must be necessarily ruled out.

Man's goodness should also form a part of his greatness. Institutions are to be run by man. Unless therefore he is good, institutions, however good in themselves, will be vitiated in their performance. Contrarily, even bad institutions run by good man can be made to deliver *some* goods. As a matter of fact institutions are projections of men, and the infrastructures of better social institutions have to be built up in the minds of men.

With these preliminary observations we shall now proceed to discuss the philosophical thoughts of the triad with particular reference to their human implications. The human aspect is after all concerned with the concept of man.

(a) WORLD-VIEW OF GANDHI

The Mahatma did not found any school of philosophy. He swore his allegiance to the Vedanta group of literature technically known as *Prasthanatraya*—*Upanishads*, *Vedanta-sūtras* and *Bhagavadgītā*. Gandhi, however, did not regard these Hindu scriptures as revealed words of God and hence immutable. Revelation, even if true, was made to one person only. To others it is no better than a hearsay and to be treated as such. In fact, sages themselves have treated them in this way and have

often given new and even contradictory interpretations of them in the light of their respective realisation of the "truth". Following this practice Gandhi proceeded to give his own version of the "truth" in pursuance of which he had to interpret the scriptures in a novel way to suit his predilections and requirements. He even thought of bringing out a new edition of them¹. Gandhi has thus sought to put new wine in old bottles. That is why his right to be regarded as an original thinker has largely gone by default.

Gandhi was drawn towards the Vedanta group of literature because he was out and out a religious man and the Vedanta is the only *Ishwaravadi* sophisticated philosophy of the Hindus. Other schools of the Hindu philosophy uphold a *swabhavavadi* (naturalistic) view of the world although a good deal of theistic ideas had been arbitrarily imposed upon them. As we shall see afterwards, Roy strengthened the naturalistic tradition of ancient India while both Gandhi and Aurobindo tried to develop the Vedanta. Gandhi its theoretical side and Aurobindo the technical side. But even among the Vedantic texts Gandhi felt attracted not so much towards the early Vedanta as towards its later presentation.

Gandhi came of a Vaishnava family much influenced by Jainism. Truth and non-violence were the two cardinal virtues held aloft in his family and in his society. He imbibed these virtues from his very boyhood and then sought to find scriptural support for them. He found it in the Vedantic version of the manward communication of the Transcendental Truth. To him the Vedantic description of Brahman as a Trinity—*Sachchidananda* comprising *sat*, *chit* and *ananda* appeared to be very significant in this respect. Around the direct experience *within* of this entity and its scriptural revelation *without* has developed the philosophical structure of Gandhi's thought.

The term '*Sachchidananda*' does not occur in the early *Upanishads*, not even in Badarayana and Samkara. It is in such later Vedantic works like *Nrisimhottaratap* and *Ramottaratap* that the term is used for the first time, and gradually a regular practice grew up to refer Brahman as *Sachchidananda*. All the earlier statements about Brahman such as *satyam*, *jnanam*,

anantam, anandam, etc. have been sought to be comprehended under the three ideas conveyed by the term. It serves as the intellectual framework for the philosophical thought of Gandhi and, as we shall see later on, of Aurobindo as well. But while Aurobindo emphasised the *chit* aspect of *Sachchidananda*, Gandhi did its *sat* aspect.

Now the word *sat* is the equivalent of *satyam* and has three different dimensions—ontological, epistemological and ethical.² In ontology it is 'existent', in epistemology 'true' and in ethics 'good'. In the ontological sense *sat* is the attribute of God as the sole and absolute reality. As an epistemological category *sat* means either the correspondence of one's idea the reality outside or the mere inner consistency of a system of ideas while the ethical aspect relates to a code of conduct. For the sake of clear thinking these three connotations of the term should be kept distinct. But the sages of the *Upanisad*-s did not always do that, and the sage of Sabarmati also did not improve upon it. This failure has given rise to a lot of semantic difficulties.

Gandhi was primarily an ethical man and was interested in ethical living. But he was drawn into the domain of philosophy and metaphysics while going to indicate the source and sanction of his values. That is to say, the Mahatma's regard for *sat* as 'good' drove him to consider *sat* as 'existent' and 'true'. In his ethical life, however, the truth-value was given the supreme importance, and an attempt has been made to derive all his other values as corollaries from it.

At first, the faith in God and the pursuit of truth remained two separate quests for Gandhi. From about 1925, however, he started identifying Truth (with capital T) with God and took the position that God was Truth. In his support Gandhi contended that the scriptures of all religions had "one thousand names" of God. But the list of these names could not said to be exhaustive, and his present definition was only another name of defining God. But some half a decade after, i.e., from 1931 Gandhi went one step further and vouchsafed that Truth was God.³

Now, such a simple conversion of a universal affirmative proposition is not permissible under in Western logic although

it may be justified according to a rule of Hindu logic known as *sahopalambha-niyama*. The *saha* in *sahopalambha* (*saha* + *upalambha*) means *ekartha* or identity, *upalambha* consciousness and the *niyama* or rule is taken to mean that the idea and the object are experienced as identical. It, however, reduces the argument to a tautology but Gandhi did not bother himself much over the logical niceties.

Gandhi took the new position not only to glorify the truth-value. He also believed that the new definition of God would serve as the meeting ground of all religions and would accommodate, in addition, the atheists who are not believers in God but are great votaries of truth. This is nothing but self-delusion.

Gandhi refused to see in this connection that each religion has its own version of "truth" and consider the other versions as false. By its nature religion cannot be a unifying force. Instead it tends to divide. As against religion, science has proved to be the most successful of human efforts to break through all sorts of barriers and establish the unity of man. Gandhi's deceptive use of the noble word 'truth' would even be greater failure to net in the atheists because their concept of truth is quite different from that of Gandhi's.

The position may be illustrated by reference to Roy who was an atheist and also attached supreme importance to truth. He adhered to the correspondence theory of truth according to which the correspondence of an idea with a fact of the outside world constitutes the sole test of a truth. This correspondence becomes a truth when it comes within man's apprehension. But the correspondence theory of truth had little appeal to an idealist like Gandhi for whom the factual world, even if it exists at all, was not of sufficient experience. He instead believed in the coherence theory of truth which says that the content of truth is coherence with the general structure of one's metaphysical beliefs about the universe as a whole. The universe being teleological, the different parts are all related to the whole and can acquire significance only in relation to the purpose for which the universe has been created. His truth was *paramarthic* truth as against the *vayavaharic* truth.

Since the Gandhian truths did not need to have any reference

to the external world, they mostly had their origin in his fantasy born of neurosis. He held to these truths for these were emotionally satisfying to him.

Ahimsa, as we have seen, was another emotionally satisfying idea of Gandhi. It had its origin as a magical formula in the *Yajurveda*. When an axe, a knife or a razor was used for severing a branch from a tree or cutting open an animal for taking out its limbs for a sacrifice or shaving a sacrificer, a formula like "O axe, do not injure it", etc. was chanted to ensure that the soul of an object with which the sharp instrument was to come in contact did not suffer any injury. The magical formula was raised to the status of an ethical principle as a part of the comprehensive struggle waged by the Jains and the Buddhists against the Vedic sacrifices. After passing through many a vicissitude *ahimsa* at last secured a firm hold upon the Indian mind as a result of the country-wide propaganda carried on in its favour by Asoka through his edicts, etc. The cause of *ahimsa* was further strengthened with the rise of Vaisnavism.

Non-violence became a way of life with Gandhi. He even saw in history a progressive movement towards the ideal of *ahimsa*. Men started his career as hunters and then took to agriculture for food, and if in this way he has "steadily" progressed towards *ahimsa*, it follows that he will have to progress "still further" towards it because it is only in this way a well-ordered society is possible and life worth living¹. The ethical realisation would increasingly dawn on man that his supremacy over lower animals requires him to protect the latter.

Non-violence is, however, a negative term. In its positive aspect it is equivalent to love and attraction. Gandhi found the operation of the forces of love and attraction throughout the universe. Thus he contended that even though there is "enough repulsion" in nature, it lives by attraction. If there is the law of gravitation in inanimate matter, there is also a plenty of cooperation among lower animals. So man too does not **and cannot live by destruction**.

Accordingly Gandhi came to the conclusion that non-violence is not "an article of exclusive human manufacture" and has its place ingrained in the cosmic process. Non-violence, like truth,

should be regarded as an attribute of God. But still Gandhi refused to give the two an identical status, non-violence being only derivative value from the Truth and a means of realising the Truth. More properly, it is (Truth) an ethical principle. Truth as an ontological principle and Truth as an ethical principle are only two aspects of the same entity—God. Truth-God who speaks through nature reveals himself through humanity as well.

The Rigvedic concept of *rita* denotes both the cosmic order and the moral order. Then with the progress of time the concept lost its hold upon the Aryan mind. Truth and morality now began chartering their independent courses. The *Upanisad*-s concentrated on finding the Truth while the *Dharmasastra*-s devoted to themselves almost wholly to the duties of man. In Gandhi the two trends combined once again into one whole, and the concept of *rita* re-appeared. We also find explicit references to it in some of his writings.

The use of a composite concept is often fraught with semantic difficulties. Truth as an ontological principle is ethically neutral. So truth as an ethical principle cannot be logically derived from truth as an ontological principle. We can only use the same word in two different senses. Thus when Gandhi spoke of fighting for the truth, what he actually meant was that he was trying to right a wrong. Truth and non-violence can be described as related values only within a system of values under the coherence theory of truth.

Implication for man: Erich Fromm has very pertinently pointed out that the phenomenon of alienation which has precipitated a crisis in modern civilisation has a religious origin. At the dawn of civilisation man created gods in his own image. He spent his energies and artistic capacities on making an idol and then bowed down to the work of his own hands. He also projects his best qualities into the deity until the latter becomes the quintessence of man and man an utterly insignificant being. Then he prayed to the deity to give him back some of those very qualities which he himself had put in the deity. Gandhi himself admitted it when he said: "Man's conception of God is naturally limited. Each one has, therefore, to think

of Him as best appeals to him, provided that the conception is pure and elevating." The picture of God which appealed to Gandhi most was that he was an embodiment of truth and non-violence, the twin virtues which he himself learned to hold aloft in life⁵.

Although man has created God in his image, religion takes the reverse position. It takes God to be the creator of the world, and man is supposed to be specially created by Him in His own image. Gandhi, like a true Vaisnava, subscribed to the *lila* theory of creation which further dwarfs man. Only if the universe is law-governed, man can know the laws and establish his supremacy over it. But the *lila* theory militates against the idea of a law-governed universe. But this theory is indeed the necessary deduction of the concept of the *self-sufficient* Brahman. The issue is—If Brahman was self-sufficient, why then did He feel at all the urge or the necessity of creating the universe? To cope with this issue the early *Upanisad*s argued that the universe like the horns of a hare, does not exist nor, from the very nature of the case, can it exist like the son of a barren woman. This is the famous *ajata-vada* (theory of not being born) of the *Upanisad*s. But since it is impossible to live upto this philosophy, a realistic tendency soon tended to grow within the vedantic thought and reached its culmination in Sankara. He visualised two levels of truth, absolute and relative, two levels of existence. At the higher level Brahman *alone* exists and the vision of this multiform universe is *maya*. But at the lower level Brahman is conceived as God who created the universe. But where did God get the matter with which the universe was created? If the matter was external, it must be also eternal and have the status of a second god. So it was presumed that God created the universe out of His own body in the same way as a spider weaves its web with fiber from its body. This is the vedantic theory of dependent existence which leaves no scope for man to shew away from God like bubbles from water.

Now, the *Vaishnava* vedanta which rose in revolt against the *Advaita* Vedanta and its *maya* doctrine had to cope with the same old basic level of truth, and took the same position as the

lower level of existence, as the reality by itself. They subscribed to the *lila* theory of creation. According to them, God created the universe out of fun, and the entire world is the play-ground of the *Lilamaya* the *anantaguna* Brahman playing in the world as Sachchidananda. Gandhi therefore observed: "Let us dance to the tune of His bansi lute and all would be well."⁶ His writings are full of statements expressing similar sentiments. Their focus is thus on God's will and not on human will, man's status being no better than that of a plaything of the *Lilamaya*.

It may be further pointed out that even if Gandhi entertained no firm belief in the law of nature, he had an extreme fondness for the Hindu law of karma which he took to be "inexorable and impossible of evasion". Now the law has lent itself to both theistic and atheistic interpretations. Vedic atheists like the Purva-Mimamsakas have refused to postulate any person as the superintendent of the law of karma. They have presumed the existence of actions as producing *apurya*, an unprecedented potential factor in the agent, which makes the subject of belittling experiences in course of this or future life. As a theist, Gandhi could not take an atheistic view of karma. He believed that no unconscious thing can act by itself and so karma is not auto-dynamic. God is the *karmadhaksha* of the law of karma. He renders its operation possible. Gandhi asserted that God "laid down the law and as it were retired". This traditional Hindu view of life definitely circumscribes the scope of human freedom, and Gandhi too held that "the free will we enjoy is less than that of a passenger on crowded deck"⁷ and "man can make his destiny only in so far as he is allowed by the Great Power which overrides all our intentions, all our plans and carries out His plans". So for Gandhi the determinism of the Divine Will and the determinism of the law of karma are complementary to each other. He was a hard determinist.

Gandhi's habit of daily prayer a number of times acquires relevance only against the theory of *lila* and Divine Will. If successive events are bound together by an invariable chain of cause and effect, prayer has little utility in human life. Far from being a means of escape of man, prayer is derogatory

199.54

B.C.E.R.T. West Bengal

Date

Vol. No.



to human dignity. To look continually to some great power above, even if real, is not at all morally ennobling. It is true that God offered prayer to Truth-God but prayer cannot be offered to an impersonal principle. He must be a living personality.

Furthermore, Gandhi denigrated human reason which makes man great. His concept of truth also did not lead him to attach much importance to reason. Gandhi relied more upon faith which he described as "the kind of sixth sense". The truth of the faith is the belief of the heart and not of the head. One version of it was his plea for "inner voice" which he identified with the voice of God. Gandhi often claimed to have been guided by it. The true character of this "voice", however, becomes clear to us when we take into account the *adhikariveda* introduced by Gandhi in the matter. According to him, everyone is not competent to hear it. Gandhi himself had to go through such acts of self-purification as brahmacharya, days of silence, fasts, prayers, etc. before the "voice" became audible to him. What actually happened was that as a result of undergoing physical mortifications he fell a victim to a mild type of hallucination which made him susceptible to auto-suggestions. He now heard what he *wanted* to hear. Certainly the "voice" could not be the voice of Almighty God when Gandhi himself admitted to have committed some "Himalayan blunders" even when he was guided by it. This proves that it was the voice of his unconscious mind and not of any transcendental authority. But all these pertinent questions did not perturb Gandhi who had suspended all rational judgements in favour of a faith-full life.

So far as Gandhi *believed* that God acted and spoke through him, he might have *personally* strengthened. But it in no way improves the image of man.

In a sense, of course, Gandhi had the noblest concept of man for, as a Vedantist, he exalted man to the level of Brahman. But what the Vedanta actually exalts is not the concrete man of flesh and blood but a disembodied abstraction like the Atman. The empirical man is ridiculed. His body is reviled and his desires are suppressed. Under the Vedantic cum-Gandhian scheme of things nothing is to be done for the sheer joy of

it. Everything must have a higher purpose to serve the purpose of God. Empirical existence itself is viewed as the greatest curse that can befall man. Through his meaningless will to live man is responsible for his own suffering. The highest goal for him is therefore to come out of this recurring cycle of birth and death and attain salvation.

ETHICAL THOUGHT

Gandhi wanted man to be good and not great, ethical and not intellectual. Since the Vedanta minimised the importance of the empirical world, it does not give much scope for ethics. This fact led Rammohun, the pioneer of the Vedantic movement in modern India, to turn his face towards Christianity. For his ethical inspiration Gandhi, however, looked to the *Bhagwadgita* which, although a fruit of the Vedanta, has an emphasis of its own. This emphasis has been added because the *Gita* seeks to rectify the excesses of the Vedanta and bridge the vast gulf that exists between the doctrine and the realities of life.

Now, the *Gita* has been accused of being full of inconsistencies. But these inconsistencies disappear if we view it against the situational context in which it was allegedly born. The text was meant to urge the demoralised Arjuna to join the fight and so its author has tried to convince him of the necessity of fighting from as many angles of vision as possible. The author wanted to be persuasive and not consistent. But torn out of this context the text appears to be an eclectic one replete with inconsistencies. It has given the opportunity to each disputant to interpret it according to his inclination.

If it is granted that the *Gita* represents an attempt to correct the idealistic excesses of the Vedanta, then its activist interpretation seems to be logical. No pre-Samkarite commentary of the *Gita* has been available upto now but from Samkara we come to know that all the previous commentaries had given an activist interpretation, and he was the first person to deviate from this main stream by eulogising the *jñānāyoga*. Then coming to the middle of the 19th century Bankim is found to have laid emphasis upon *bhaktiyoga* in his incomplete commentary. It is

however, Tilak who returned to the pre-Samkarite tradition and proclaimed *karmayoga* as the central teaching of the *Gita*. According to him, the *Gita* advocates disinterested action—a via media between the actionlessness of the Vedanta and the interested action pursued by the general run of people. If the renunciation of actions is the accepted message of the Vedanta, the *Gita* prescribes the renunciation of the results of actions. Tilak's interpretation had set the pace of modern Hindus.

Gandhi was an activist. So he was driven towards the interpretation given by Tilak. But he did not keep himself confined to the latter's framework only. He went far beyond it and read the different ethical practices indulged by him into the verses of the text just as he inflicted the ethical values entertained by him on the concept of God. Gandhi's credential in this respect was that he was "a humble but very earnest seeker after truth" and he was endeavouring to enforce the meaning of the *Gita* in his own conduct "for an unbroken period of forty years".

The term 'yoga' has been used in the *Gita* rather loosely to indicate the dominant trait in one's spiritual personality like love for knowledge, etc. Gandhi became a *karmayogi* in this sense. He, unlike Aurobindo, is never known to have practised the technical yoga of Patanjali. Aurobindo too started his religious career as a *karmayogi* but he finished it as a *purnayogi*. We find no such development in the case of Gandhi. He started with the *Bhagavadgita* and maintained his steadfast adherence to it till the last days of his life although he continued to draw some inspiration from the Vedanta as well.

The *karmayoga* of Gandhi consisted in leading a dedicated life of rendering service to suffering humanity. What he has called social service is nothing but the message of *lokasamgraha* preached in the *Bhagavadgita*.

Taking the clue from Vivekananda, Gandhi has derived a philosophical sanction for his life of service in the Vedantic contention of the "absolute oneness of God and therefore of humanity". He argued that it does not matter that we have "many bodies" for we have "but one soul". "The rays of sun", continued he, "are many through retraction. But they have the same source". Gandhi then drew his conclusion thus: "Man's

ultimate aim is the realisation of God . . . The immediate service of all human beings becomes a necessary part of the endeavour simply because the only way to find God is to see Him in His creation and be one with it. This can only be done by service of all".

But although Gandhi was thus committed to the service of all humanity, he considered service to the Indian humanity as the first charge upon his attention because "my countrymen are my nearest neighbours" and they are "so helpless".¹⁰ Gandhi refused to make the sophistry about the illusory character of the world as an excuse for not rendering service to his fellow-men for "even dreams are true while they last and to the sufferer his suffering is a grim reality".

Now, without losing view of the mankind and the nation Gandhi wanted one to prove faithful to one's caste-duties as well. It is one's *swadharma* as explained in the *Gita*. According to the *Gita*, the Lord has created the *varna* system according to "guna" and "karma". Gandhi remarked hereon that the guna and the karma are inherited by birth. Thus derived sanction for a basically unjust social order from the Hindu law of karma even though he had taken steps to ameliorate some of its rigours in other ways. There is no escape from that fact that even if the Vedanta proclaims the identity of all men with Brahman, the Varnasrama-dharma has permanently condemned well over half the human beings to Sudrahood simply on the basis of the accidents of their birth. It is only mincing matters when Gandhi declared that if the Brahmans are the highest caste in the divinely ordained Varnasrama-dharma, it is because that "Brahminism is the culmination of other varnas just as the head is the culmination of the body" and that a Brahmin has "the capacity for superior service, not superior status".¹¹ Gandhism thus serves as an *raison de tre* of an ideology of social slavery.

But it is required that whatever work one may do, he must do it as God's work with a detached mind and without caring for its result. In fact, what is unconcern and indifference in the Vedanta has been transformed into equanimity in the *Gita*. This has been called the *anasakti* yoga in the *Gita*. A devotee is expected to do his allotted duties in a disinterested way till

the natural world and the social world drop away from the emancipated self. The theory of detached action has also upgraded God sky-high and denegated man almost to nothing. We now act not because we want it but it is wanted of us by "the Lord of our being". The Vedanta wants us to see God in all creatures and in all things. The *Gita* says that it is not enough and we must see Him *also* in all events and in all our actions - even all our thoughts and feelings.

On the face of it, the theory of disinterested work has a close resemblance to Calvin's philosophy of work for the greater glory of God, and so it may be presumed that if Calvinism contributed largely towards the industrialisation of Europe, the *Gita's* teaching of activism may be similarly utilised in the case of India. But here we must not omit to note that the *Gita* prescribes disinterested action conforming to the pattern of behaviour characteristic of one's hereditary station in society. The emphasis is on tradition-oriented action rather than on voluntaristic action. Besides, Gandhi, as we shall see later on, was opposed to industrialisation in the European sense of the term and would refuse to admit that the *Gita's* teaching has any such implication for the Indian society.

Finally, it may be pointed out that in a religious view of life service to man has not its own justification. The duty towards our fellow-men is a duty derived from the acceptance of our duty towards God; and unless the primary duty is accepted, the secondary duty cannot stand.

The foregoing review shows that God and not man is the measure of the ethico-philosophical thought of Gandhi. Man enters into his scheme of things only as the bearer of Divine values.

NOTES

1. *Harijan* dated 28. 11. 1936.
2. For different mystic interpretations of the word *satyam* see Deussen's *Philosophy of the Upanishads*, pp. 118-119.
3. *Young India* dated 31. 12. 31.

4. *Ibid*, dated 1. 10. 31 and *Harijan* dated 11. 8. 40.
5. *Harijan* dated 18. 8. 1946.
6. *Young India* dated 5. 3. 1925.
7. *Harijan* dated 23. 3. 1940.
8. *Ibid*, dated 20. 4. 47.
9. *Young India* dated 25. 3. 1924.
10. *Harijan* dated 29. 6. 1947.
11. *Young India* dated 24. 11. 1927.

(b) WORLD-VIEW OF AUROBINDO

If Gandhi emphasised the *sat* aspect of Sachchidananda, the emphasis of Aurobindo was on His *chit* aspect. *Chit* means mind or consciousness. Like the Truth-Force of Gandhi, Aurobindo called it Consciousness-Force. The latter found the solution of the contemporary world's problems in the emergence of Super-consciousness.

Aurobindo took an essentially Vedantic view of consciousness, it being taken to be the essence of a Supernatural Agency. In sharp contrast with this Vedantic view, the Lokayatists of ancient India took a frankly materialist view of it. The Samkhya, no doubt, spoke of the evolution of the mind from matter but it was the Lokayatists who gave a fuller account of it. They held consciousness to be a product of matter, and in reply to the question as to how intrinsically unconscious matter could produce consciousness, they pointed out that there was no difficulty involved in the process. It is just like producing *mada-sakti* (intoxicating matter) from non-intoxicating ingredients of alcoholic drink.

The Lokayatists' use of the analogy of *mada-sakti* to explain the origin of consciousness is highly significant. The natural process of fermentation was held in superstitious awe by the ancient people because the abnormal state of mind which it produces suggested to them the idea that it contains an invisible spirit that arises from the boiling liquid. That is why a strong alcoholic drink is still called 'spirit'. The Lokayatists exploded this "spiritualistic" myth by giving a completely naturalistic view of fermentation and distillation and laid the theoretical position on which science could move further in explanation of

the origin of consciousness. As we shall see later on, Roy, true to his scientific orientation, proceeded on the theoretical position laid down by the Lokayatists and regarded consciousness as an accidental quality in a self because of a fortuitous combination of various physical factors. Aurobindo, however, developed on the theoretical position laid down in the Vedanta.

The fundamental assumption of Aurobindo was, however, that all reality is consciousness and should be measured only by the level of consciousness manifested. The *Sachchidananda* as Consciousness-Force is thus revealed outside Himself. Man must cooperate with this superconscient force to achieve integral consciousness. Aurobindo did not want freedom from the world process and rebirth. He believed in the replacement of man by a gnostic and supramental being. He was of opinion that man is a transitional being. Supermanhood is the "next distinct and triumphant evolutionary step to be reached by earthly nature". Aurobindo took the concept of superman from Nietzsche and interpreted it in spiritual terms.

Evolution constitutes the keynote of modern thought. With it the materialistic view of the universe and life became complete. Newtonian physics was not so difficult for the religious camp to accommodate. In fact, it could even be welcomed by its followers as lending support to the argument from design. But religion was found relenting before the attack of Darwin who undermined the argument from design by his theory of blind evolution.

But religious people have again refused to yield without a fight. Darwin has demonstrated that the universe has grown gradually to be what it is through the play of forces inherent in it. It means the recognition of immanent energy by means of which the universe is undergoing constant changes. If therefore the idea of God is to be retained at all, Darwinism suggests a God within, rather than without, the world process. The doctrine of Divine immanence thus gains at the cost of Divine transcendence. The position was accordingly made particularly unsafe for Islam and Christianity which believes in a transcendental God. Hinduism, however, did not find much difficulty in assimilating the Darwinian ideas because from the

beginning the Vedanta viewed God as both transcendent and immanent in nature. Aurobindo could thus easily spiritualise the concept of evolution. Darwin spoke of the blind and mechanical process of nature but Aurobindo made it conscious and teleological. The evolution, according to him, is not of matter as such but of *Sachchidananda*. The world-evolution has been portrayed by him as nothing but the drive of *Sachchidananda* for self-expression undertaken out of fun. This drive has not yet exhausted itself.

The challenge of Darwinism did not concern Gandhi much. He did not think it worthwhile to integrate the Darwinian ideas with his religious thought. It remained peculiarly pre-Darwinian. Gandhi regarded the universe with men in it as constituting one organic whole which is simply given. It is Aurobindo who sought to meet the bold challenge of the Darwinian ideas and thus modernise the Hindu idealist thought propounded in the Upanisads.

The modern scientific view is that life emerged from matter. Aurobindo now added that this emergence would not have been possible unless life was *already* involved in matter. The emergence of life was thus a preordained event in the cosmic plan and all the higher emergents are latent in it. This is the meaning of the statement in the *Taittiriya Upanisad* that "matter is Brahman". It is accordingly necessary to consider matter also as spiritual. Its difference from spirit is that it is only at a different level of evolution. Matter is spirit in gross form and spirit is matter in subtle form. Both alike are aspects of "One Omnipresent Reality—the *Sachchidananda*". The Divine Life thus exists in us both as a potentiality and a necessity. Unlike Gandhi, Aurobindo was of opinion that our present life is unfinished. We are destined to go beyond the present limit and evolve into the higher life which has been silently working within us from the very outset.

Gandhi did not visualise any higher spiritual destiny for the universe and man as a part thereof. He spoke of only creating a better society of improved man (*Ramrajya*) which would be only more moral than the present one. But Aurobindo contended that morality is not the same thing as spirituality

It is of much inferior order.

Under Aurobindo's scheme the Absolute Reality (*Sachchidananda*), is a Pure Existent. But his energy and movement (*chit*) are also equally real. Being therefore connotes becoming. When the urge for self-expression appeared in the *Sachchidananda*, he descended straight into matter which appears to be most unconscious. The descending order was called involution. But from the very dawn of creation the Spirit that was involved in matter began its slow but sure movement upward back to its source of origin. The ascending order called evolution has been described thus—Matter, Life, Mind and Supermind. Since the Supermind is *Sachchidananda* manifested, there exists a vast difference between the Supermind and the mind, and so some intermediate stages between the two are also visualised, e.g., Overmind, Intuitive Mind, Illumined Mind and Higher Mind.¹ Furthermore, Aurobindo has visualised an inward movement of the evolutionary process bringing about integration in its wake. Thus when life evolved from matter, it did not escape from matter. It only energised matter. Then when mind evolved from life, a new integration was made of all the three.

This scheme of evolution has been interpreted as a new version of the scheme of the *Taittiriya Upanisad* which has seen man in a number of successive states of reality—*annamaya*, *pranamaya*, *monomaya*, *vijnanamaya* and *anandamaya*. And the Upanisadic description of the universe as alternately issuing out of Brahman in successive orders of ether, air, fire, water and earth and its going back to the source in the inverse order might have suggested to Aurobindo's mind the idea of the descent and ascent of *Sachchidananda*.

Man with his highly developed mind is, according to Aurobindo, by no means the final phase of the evolutionary process. Man is only a stage and not the terminus. The next step in the evolutionary process is to be the evolution of the mind into the Super-mind whose instruments would be intuition and direct perception instead of the imperfect reasoning intellect possessed by man at present. There, however, intervenes a solid veil between the mind and the Super-mind, and the rending of this veil is the condition of the divine life in humanity.

But the veil would not be rent unless there is an intense desire on the part of man to do so for receiving the light and power of the Supermind. The previous process of evolution was rather blind and instinctive. Hence it was slow and desultory. Now to hasten the next step in the evolutionary process man must consciously participate in it. This is the point where his philosophy has come to be joined with yoga, and his Integral Yoga has been conceived to hasten the evolutionary process. It would make man an open channel through which the Divine Cosmic Will will function uninterruptedly. That is why Aurobindo has called his yoga "conscious evolution".

Aurobindo's Integral Yoga should be distinguished from the traditional yoga.² The latter is the technique of realising *practically* the absolute identity of the individual soul with the Supreme Soul preached theoretically in the Upanisads. Patanjali has dealt with this yoga in three of the four chapters of his *Yogasutra*. This chapters—1st, 2nd and last—are respectively called 'samadhipada', 'sadhanapada' and 'kaivalyapada' and have their theoretical consistency. But the third chapter designated 'bibhutipada' has hardly any organic link with the rest of the text. Here we have a description of "supernatural" powers which are allegedly acquired by a yogi in course of his yoga practice. Serious yogis who want to realise the Vedantic truth are generally advised to ignore these powers and travel beyond them to reach the realisation of Advaitahood.

Aurobindo, however, erected his Integral Yoga basically on this chapter. He, of course, had his Advaita realisation while he was in jail, as was testified by him in his now famous Uttarpara speech and in his book *Karakahiri*. But he did not remain stationary there. In opposition to the common practice, he subsequently reverted to the 'bibhutipada' stage and devoted himself to the acquisition of "supernatural" powers. He did it because traditional yoga could only give individual liberation while he was interested in the liberation of mankind as a whole. Following the Buddhist practice we may therefore call the traditional yoga as *hinayana yoga* and the Integral Yoga as *mahayana Yoga*.

This was natural for Aurobindo to do for he was initially

attracted towards yoga not to achieve individual liberation but to achieve the liberation of the motherland. When both the violent and non-violent methods failed to deliver the goods, Aurobindo took to the yoga as third way reportedly at the suggestion of his fellow-fighter Debabrata Basu, the future Prajnananda Swami. His intention was to drive away the Britishers by using the occult powers acquired through the yoga practice. By this time he even performed a *yajna* with the help of a Tantric sadhu for destroying the foreign enemy. Ultimately when he came to imbibe the consciousness of human unity through his Advaita realisation, the aim of the liberation of the country was expanded into that of the liberation of the earth. It is not science but yoga which would thus lay the basis for the greatness of "man".

The 'bibhutipada' of Patanjali's text, however, betrays its magical origin. Magic, as we know, was based on the belief that like produces like. It is assumed that the same forces operate in the same manner in both the universe (macrosm) and the human body (microsm), and we can therefore control the forces of nature in our favour by controlling those of our body. Different postures of the hathayoga gives a yogi a predominant control over his body. Patanjali himself enlisted as many as 37 occult powers which can be acquired by yoga. But these are only illustrative and not exhaustive. It is widely believed in Aurobindo's circle that Lenin became victorious in Russia because the Master's yogasakti worked behind him, and that the tide of the Second World War turned in favour of the Allied Powers after their debacle at Dunkirk because the same force came to their rescue at this stage. The belief in the power of the yoga to accelerate the descent of the Supermind was thus quite in keeping with this line.

Now, if a question is asked as to how a magical act can be connected with the supposed result at a different time and at a different place, the answer given by the Indian exponents of the magical view of life is that the distance and the interval are covered by the operation of the *apurva* (which literally means 'not existing before') in an invisible form. We can know it simply on the basis of the scriptural authority. The magical

view of *yogasakti* has been further reinforced by the Tantra.

Aurobindo was, however, not carried away by his "supernatural" powers which he acquired and exercised not to serve any selfish ends but to serve public purposes only. At the same time he realised the traditionally ultimate aim of practising yoga—the realisation of the identity between the Brahman and the world.

But coming to Pondicherry, Aurobindo outlived *raj yoga*. Unlike Swami Dayananda, the illustrious founder of the Arya Samaj, he did not develop an objection to *raj yoga* for it was based on a false view of the human anatomy giving rise to a false realisation (see Appendix A). Aurobindo now found fault with the *raj yoga* because it was too much dependent upon abnormal states of trance leading to a withdrawal from the worldly life while by this time he had widened the scope of his *yogasadhana* and included the transformation of the earth-life too as its aim. Aurobindo found the *raj yoga* further ill-suited to its purpose because its practice involved a heavy dose of physical mortification. Fasting and sleeplessness made the nerves morbid and excited and weakened the brain, thus generating delusions and fantasies. He was in favour of giving a *sadhak* sufficient food and sleep to maintain the body and its health. He only insisted that one must take body without attachment or desire. At the same time he wanted the complete elimination of sex-tendencies.

For Aurobindo at this stage there was no fixed method of yoga applicable to all. Each man was to find his own method. So some aspirant in the yoga line might find the *raj yoga* useful. But in that case Aurobindo would have it adapted to his aim by introducing into it the idea of descent as well. It is the descent of the new consciousness attained by the ascent which is essential for the Divine fulfilment of life. *Sachchidananda* in the shape of *kula kundalini* is said to have descended first to the *muladhara* and remains seated there as *kula kundalini* after piercing through the *stahasaras*. Its ascent is then achieved through the practice of yoga. In the *raj yoga* the ascent is the real thing, and if there is descent, it is "only an incident on the way or resulting from the ascent". Aurobindo wanted to emphasise the descent as an

independent process for the purpose of transforming human life. He also shifted his emphasis from the *chakra*-s to the whole body.

As we have already seen, the human anatomy on which the so-called *raj yoga* is established is Tantric in origin. Aurobindo however, preferred to go to the source—the *yogasutra* of Patanjali where yoga essentially means *dharana* and *dhyana* (concentration and contemplation). The sitting motionless posture is the natural posture for concentrated meditation. Concentration would open one to the divine in order that aspiration and self-surrender might be effective. Once the surrender is complete, personal activity is to be replaced by divine activity taking up spiritual growth and elevating human consciousness by the divine Consciousness-Force. Aurobindo held that the divine would make the individual "feel the presence of the divine in every centre of his consciousness, in every fibrillation of his life-force, in every cell of his body". It is, however, stipulated that the person who desires to proceed on this path must first have a "positive inner call."

Aurobindo further believed that the requisite transformation in the individual or in a dozen of individuals would produce a corresponding transformation in the society and in the world. Here we find a remnant of the magical belief that like produces like.

Aurobindo's yoga is thus not "something brand new in all its elements". On the contrary it takes up "the essence and many processes of the old yogas". Its "newness" consists "in its aim, standpoint and the totality of its methods."

ETHICAL THOUGHT

The ethical thought of Aurobindo followed from his metaphysical thought. Since he wanted a "spiritual" solution of the contemporary crisis of human civilisation, he did not attach much importance to human morality as such.

According to Aurobindo, the moral life necessarily implies a limitation and is based on the relation of the moral being with other selves of the same order. The moral life can exist

only when there are ideals to be realised and a social intercourse between persons. In this sense God cannot be said to be moral, He being "beyond good and evil".

The duality of good and evil is also absent from the world of matter. In fact, the duality begins with conscious life. The "vital mind"—the mind of desire and sensation—is the creator of the sense of evil and the fact of evil. In the animal life the fact and sense of evil are there—the evil of suffering, violence and cruelty. But the sense of moral evil is absent. In animal life there is no duality of sin and virtue. There all action is permissible for the preservation of life and the satisfaction of life-instincts. Morality is essentially a human necessity and a human invention. It does not belong to the reality³.

Aurobindo envisaged ethics along with rationalism only as a stage in the evolutionary process. The urge of *Sachchidananda* for self-expression is infra-ethical in animals, it has become ethical at the human stage and will be supra-ethical in the case of super-men. These three states, e. g. infra-ethical, ethical and supra-ethical, correspond to infra-rational, rational and supra-rational stages. By implication, therefore, Aurobindo appears to have found the source and sanction of ethics in the rationality of man. In that case, his position should be held to be analogous to that of Roy. But Aurobindo has no secular view of morality and rationality of man, both having their common origin in the drive of *Sachchidananda* for self-expression. Even the "gross formulations" of morality undertaken "out of considerations of expediency" for "a prudent limitation of egoism" are to be regarded, according to Aurobindo, as "progressive faltering steps" towards a law divine which exists "above society's external law and man's moral law beyond them".

So what is important with Aurobindo is not the working out of a perfect ethic but the spiritual transformation of man and society. Those actions and attitudes which help this evolutionary process are to be considered good. One must be led to realise that the *atman* is the Brahman. One's true self is accordingly identical with the self of the universe and with the self of each other individual. One must therefore forgo one's egoistic state in favour of a benevolent attitude towards

all fellow-creatures and fellow-men. Not because of any external compulsion but of this internal realisation one will proceed to do good work. The three aspects of Aurobindo's Integral Yoga are covered in this way. The integral realisation of the identity of the individual soul with the Supreme Soul (*jnana-yoga*) motivates men to love all of his fellow creatures (*bhakti-yoga*) and to perform disinterested action (*karma-yoga*).

SHAPE OF THE SUPERMAN TO COME

The Super-man of Aurobindo is, however, not only to have a super-mind but also a super-body. He will be thus physically quite different from man. Aurobindo has, however, not given us any particular idea about his physical shape beyond stating that "consciousness itself by its own mutation will necessitate and operate whatever mutation is needed for the body". But the Mother has given us a pen-picture of how the super-man will look. According to her, he will have a huge structure and is waiting in the heaven in a crimson surrounding to be born on earth.⁴

In this connection it may be mentioned that the Mother took a formal training in occultism in Algeria, an African colony of France, in 1907. Aurobindo himself clearly advocated the indispensability of occult knowledge for a spiritual man because the powers of an unseen world control the various activities of this earth.

Implications for man: Aurobindo actually sought to reconstruct the Indian idealist philosophy. He has more or less done to the Upanisadic doctrine what the gnostics actually did to Christianity. Aurobindo has, however, depicted a highly imaginary picture of the universe and its evolutionary process from his ingenious brain. He mistook assertions for arguments, and his account of the world-process is not certainly what it is. Its implication is also highly derogatory to man.

Now so far as the evolutionary process as envisaged by Aurobindo is concerned, it may be pointed out that the emergence of life from matter as a pre-ordained, inevitable event in the cosmic process cannot hold true because, apart from all other

things, there are planets where no symptom of life is visible. Life is indeed a chance incident depending upon a particular combination of favourable conditions. The evolutionary process cannot therefore be said to be inherently purposive. It is man who has added purpose of his own to it. Again, Aurobindo's philosophy suffers from a fatal drawback. The inmates of a building use the same stairs of a staircase both for ascending and descending purpose. In the case of *Sachchidananda*, however, the case is believed to be quite different. At the time of descending He is not to use the intermediate stairs which He is supposed to take in His ascending process and must dive headlong into matter. And the *Sachchidananda* has been made to perform this hazardous "lila" for no other reason than to save the philosophy of Aurobindo. Because, if the downward movement takes place just in the reverse order of His upward movement, the birth of the mind should have preceded that of life itself and the birth of the thinking must precede that of the thoughtless atoms. This is palpably absurd. So to evade the difficulty Aurobindo has to provide for a fundamental difference in the upward and downward movements of *Sachchidananda*. But by doing so he has also demonstrated at least by implication that his philosophy has no leg to stand upon. It is all a figment of imagination only. There is no escape from the assumption that the cosmic process embodies the evolution of material nature and not of so-called *Sachchidananda*.

It may be noted further in this connection that physical necessity is the cause of all adaptation. Hence man's size and mechanical construction are related to the size of the planet he lives on. Had he lived on Jupiter whose pull of gravity is much higher than the earth, our skeleton would have to be far stronger than to cope with the situation. And if our planet were only of the size of the moon, we would have been able to do with much less expenditure in the form of bone and sinew. Size is also a material factor if life is not to be at the mercy of small changes in the external world. If a land animal bigger than elephant is not a practical proposition, a man of the size of a beetle would not be in a position to keep his temperature constant. The given size and the given weight have resulted in the best combination

of strength and mobility for man. Similarly, man's senses are designed to give not all but the needed information about changes outside his body, and the pleasant and the unpleasant quality of sensation also derives its relevance from the environment. Now what we have said about the physical construction of man applies to his mental construction as well. There is therefore absolutely no viable basis for Aurobindo's contention that the world evolutionary process is destined to produce super-men.

Man is, however, not only completely adjusted with the earth on which he is to live. But the different parts of his body are also fully adjusted with one another, each having a biological function to fulfil. Thus the general construction of his body is determined by the fact that it is made of living matter which must be sustained by fresh matter and energy passing through it *if he is to live* and which must constantly guard itself against dangers *if he is not to die*. So, nearly 5 p.c. of the human body consists of a tube having chemical factories attached to it for taking in food materials and converting them into the form in which these can be absorbed internally. About 2 p.c. consists of arrangements—wind-pipe and lungs—for taking oxygen into our system for burning food materials and releasing the energy. Then about 10 p.c. of the body is devoted to distributing materials all over the body—the blood lymph, the tubes which hold them and the pump which drives them. More than 4 p.c. is concerned with waste materials—kidneys, bladder and, to some extent, lungs and skin, and about 40 p.c. comprises our muscles for moving about. Less than 1 p.c. is meant for reproducing the race and nearly 10 p.c. consist of reserve food stores in the shape of fat. Some of the remaining portions of the human body are concerned with special functions like protection carried out by skin, etc. Our conscious thinking and feeling are done by a small part of the brain. In addition, about 3 p.c. of our body is meant for the “difficult business” of adjusting our behaviour to what is happening around us. This task is allotted to ductless glands, nerves, spinal chord and some portions of the brain. Man is thus the most well-adjusted organism in the world.

The yogavidya, however, quite arbitrarily attaches a supernatural importance to these instruments of adjusting our behavi-

our. The traditional yoga assumes that *kulakundalini* resides in the region just below the spinal chord in the shape of a sleeping serpent. Yoga awakens it and makes it pass through the spinal chord to the highest point in the human brain. But Aurobindo, true to his philosophy, made an additional assumption of the initial downward movement of *Sachchidananda*. He first descends and penetrates through the brain and the spinal chord to the abdominal region so that it can rise again.

Thus we see that not only the concept of super-man should be regarded as a fit of poetic imagination on the part of Aurobindo. The yoga which is to accelerate his birth is also based on a fanciful distortion of the human physiology. Man should now be regarded more or less as a finished product of nature and will hardly undergo significant organic changes even in the face of changes in the environment because he now changes the environment itself to suit his requirements.

But apart from the scientific untenability of Aurobindo's contention, we should also examine its moral implication. Indeed, the cult of super-man sprang from a profound distrust of man and his ability to control the forces he himself has released. It has thus impaired the image of man beyond repair. In Gandhi's hands man suffered because God prospered. But Aurobindo has made man sustain a double injury—first before the concept of God and, next, before that of Super-man. In this connection it may be pointed out that even the so-called Super-mind or Over-mind has not been seen to have achieved any success in fields where the human mind has supposedly failed. Thus the Over-mind is believed to have descended into the body of Aurobindo in the 1930's but it did not make any material improvement in the world situation for, among other things, only a few years after the descent the Second World War broke out with an unprecedented fury characterised even by nuclear explosions. Even the immediate environment of the Master remained unaffected because soon after his demise the Indian and foreign inmates of the ashrama began quarrelling like kilkenny cats.

It is true that a magical act entails spell, and in it the result is invariably supposed to issue from the efficiency of the act

itself without any Divine interference whatsoever. Religion is humble but magic, like science, is proud. Yoga, in spite of its being rooted in magic, has, however, a good deal of religion mixed with it. The yoga system predated Patanjali but he systematised it and smuggled God into it to win the popular approval for it. God's position in it became all the more strengthened when it was loosened from the corrupted Samkhya and tied to the bandwagon of the Vedanta. To-day therefore the position stands thus: In religion there is supremacy of the Divine Will—'Thy Will be done'; and in magic we find too much of 'My will be done' but in yoga the two attitudes have been melted into a third alternative—'Our will be done'. The underlying assumption behind Integral Yoga is that man has no independent destiny and he must cooperate with the Divinely inspired evolutionary process.

From the ethical angle of vision, again, the advocates of Divine immanence have to face a great difficulty—If God is immanent in man, then how to account for his sins? Two ways have been mainly suggested to evade this difficulty. One is to argue that the Divine immanence has stopped short of man and the other is to deny the very existence of evil. Obviously a Vedantist like Aurobindo could not subscribe to the first view. So he had to deny the *real* existence of evil. But for this purpose he had to assume the supersession of the human world itself by a Super-human world.

Aurobindo's philosophy is thus a bold elucidation of Jeremiah's statement "Cursed is the man who has faith in man." We can, of course, improve human stock through eugenics and scientific breeding. By improving the environment we may also improve the nature of man. Such improvements have, however, nothing to do with Aurobindo's concept of Superman. Similarly there is a great possibility of improving the mind of man. Man is expected to do in future many things instinctively which he now learns to do after spending much time and energy. Thus, for instance, if we go on learning our alphabets in the present fashion generation after generation, at a distant future children will be born with an instinctive knowledge of the alphabets. They will then get a start at much higher

level than at present, and his energy and time which are now being spent over learning their alphabets will be released for the acquisition of some new knowledge. This will certainly be an evolutionary gain. But Aurobindo was of opinion that even if mind were perfected, still we shall not reach the final point as the power working within us is not a mind but a "spirit". and where the mental life ends, the Divine Life begins. The transition from mind to Supermind is a passage from nature to Supernature. Instead of assessing the possibilities of man in terms of the findings of science Aurobindo has undertaken the giddy but useless imaginary flights in the void.

NOTES

1. Aurobindo has discussed the nature of these stages in his *Life Divine*, Vol. II, Part II.

In his first version of the *Life Divine* there was no mention of Overmind: It was added later.

2. The traditional yoga seems to have developed out of the primitive idea of gods or spirits taking possession of man. The concept of possession has been sublimated into that of *samadhi*.

For a criticism of the theory of yoga see the author's *Vedanta and Bengal Renaissance* pp. 122-123.

3. *Life Divine*, pp. 723-724.

4. See the chapter captioned "Evolution of the Spiritual Man" in the Third Part of Aurobindo's *Life Divine*,

(c) WORLD-VIEW OF ROY

If the philosophies of Gandhi and Aurobindo developed as allies of religion, that of Roy did in the framework of modern science. The cosmology of the latter was built up on the combined ideas of Newton and Locke. Science *as science* does not attempt to set up a cosmology. But when Newton offered a complete scheme of the universe that could be tested and made successful prediction possible, the stage was set ready for a rational view of the world. Locke then showed how Newton's method could be applied to human affairs too. He was the New-

ton of social science. Nature and reason are the two sets of ideas generated by Newton and Locke. In his philosophy of New Humanism Roy has indeed sought to work out the philosophical implications of modern science and has *added* the concept of the self-sufficiency of man to the traditional concept of the self-sufficiency of nature.

The fundamental aim of Roy was to establish the sovereignty of man in an universe having no necessary transcendental reference. There is nothing outside nature, and the world has to be explained from the world itself. According to him, nature and its evolved product—man constitute one organic whole. God being a super-natural agent is not only foreign to it but also detrimental to the concept of human sovereignty. It is also no longer necessary to postulate a extra-natural category to explain the world. Had the primitive man known what we know to day, God would not have been perhaps born at all.

But before we proceed to deal with Roy's concept of man, we shall do well to see his concept of nature which largely conditions the character of man.

(1) *Concept of nature*: Roy rejected forthwith the idealistic implication of New Physics given by some theologically inclined scientists. The sociology of science shows that in the march of science the question is not merely of science *versus* religion. The religious ideas in the scientists also retarded the progress of science. Man is able to use the natural forces because nature is law-governed, and it is natural laws that speak for the trustworthiness of the natural forces. Once this trustworthiness is gone, man's possibility of using them also vanishes. Some religious-minded physicists have sought to challenge the very concept of the law-governedness of the universe.

Roy has, however, found in New Physics' a death-blow to idealism instead of upholding it. He has judged New Physics as developing the ideas of classical physics, and philosophically it is taken to represent an improvement upon, and not a negation of, the mechanistic cosmology of Newton. The Newtonian cosmology, though mechanistic, left room for a Supernatural Agency so long as the nature of gravitational force remains unexplained. But Einstein's kinematics does not require force in addition to

matter, leaving thus hardly any scope for the operation of the Divine Hand. The Theory of Relativity has done away with the ideas of absolute space and time. They are not independent entities as conceived earlier. They are woven inextricably in a background on which physical phenomena occur. Space exists because material objects exist as the distance between any two of them. Similarly time is an interval between two events. These concepts result from the experience of being and becoming of matter. Space is being and time is becoming. Since becoming presupposes being, time is welded together with space, and an eventless existence is an abstraction. The Theory of Relativity has thus dealt a death-blow to the idealist view of life.

According to Roy, the "dematerialisation" of matter merely calls for "a revolution in the notion of substance, but only perceptually, not in the conceptual sense". The conception of a physical reality remains because it can be measured mathematically but its construction is differently conceived. In that case, materialism has best to be re-stated as physical realism.²

Incidentally it may be mentioned here that as a part of his endeavour to uphold a mechanistic cosmology Roy has also assailed the Marxian concept of dialectical materialism. It has thus been contended that the mutual conflict and interpenetration of two opposites are possible only if one moves towards the other or both towards each other. It means that one or both the opposites is or are *already* endowed with a capacity for taking motion. Dialectics does not therefore generate motion. Motion is inherent in matter which is an inexhaustible reservoir of energies. The law of transformation is also exploded because in the transformation of water into heat or ice what increases or decreases quantitatively is heat but what is transformed qualitatively is not heat but water. Above all, dialectical materialism visualises the automatic movement of matter towards a *pre-determined* goal, irrespective of human volition. And, when applied to human affairs, it produces a grotesque result. Man is made free from the domination of the super-natural God to be made subservient to a natural god in the shape of productive forces.³

Furthermore, Roy defends the concept of determinism in nature. He argued that the probability Theory of New Physics

only means that the probability of a thing or event is proportional to our knowledge concerning it. When our knowledge will be complete, the concept of probability is to disappear. In fact, statistical law cannot have any validity if the principle of determinism is totally denied. So the probability of our knowledge should not be transferred to the object of knowledge⁴. And if the concept of determinism is retained, the mechanistic conception of the universe also remains.

(2) *Concept of man*: Man is an evolved product of nature. He cannot therefore have any supernatural purpose in life. Nor can he possess any "supernatural" power or faculty to know the "supernatural" truth. He can have only a natural purpose in life to fulfil which he has been equipped with appropriate capacities by nature.

If nature is explained on the basis of cosmic determinism, man is explained on the basis of cosmic continuity. There are different levels of existence in the world—physical, biological and human. These different levels are not actually "breaks". They are mutations in the process of evolution and are "brought about necessarily by the cumulative effect of the operation of the law of causality". Khorana's researches on protoplasm largely explain the jump from inorganic to organic matter.⁵

(i) *Fundamental aim of life*: Philosophical Idealists like Gandhi and Aurobindo have made much of what man is *for* and have invented some imaginary ideals for him. Roy, true to his scientific temperament, has argued that in order to understand what man is born *for*, it is necessary to know he is born *as*.

Man is not a special creation of God and not made for any special purpose of God—the realisation of God and the establishment of His kingdom on earth. He is a biological organism whose appearance on earth has no other reason than the origin of new biological species, and, like all other organisms, he seeks his own preservation and unfoldment of his latent possibilities according to the laws of his own nature. The potentialities of lower animals are exhausted by their struggle for bare existence. But man has a far richer biological equipment than other animals. His body is not specialised for any single activity but has a wonderful plasticity. So it has been possible for him to

utilise a large portion of his external environment as well as his internal psychosomatic resources. Because of the working of his overdeveloped brain the primitive man had more mental energy than what was needed for a sheer animal existence. He therefore felt the necessity of diverting his surplus energy and superior capacity in other directions and began building up a civilisation.

Man's struggle for existence is thus carried on at a higher plane, and in his case the biological urge has become the conscious urge for freedom. He wants to be progressively freed of all restrictions upon the unfoldment of his potentialities—freedom *from* restrictions to unfold his potentialities. And in his endeavour to unfold his potentialities man has created society, science, art, music, literature, etc. Ultimately these have taken the shape of pursuing certain values, namely, truth, beauty and morality. The pursuit of truth enables man to control his environment, that of beauty makes the environment agreeable and morality makes collective life possible.

(ii) *Capacities*: Man is born out of the background of a law-governed nature. Life appeared on earth at a certain stage of evolution when its surface became congenial to the psycho-chemical activity which is required for life, and life is also connected with certain chemical compounds. Such is the background of the origin of life. Man, however, differentiated himself from other animals when his nervous and cerebral systems recorded a significant development. A "red thread" can thus be traced to connect man with the physical universe. Man has thus no mental faculty which is his exclusive prerogative. His whole psychic life differs from the nearest related mammals only in degree and not in kind.

Reason: The root of the term 'rationality' is '*ratio*' which means relation. Rationality consists in thinking in terms of relation—an invariable relation which is only another name for causal connection.

Rationalism which is the *summum bonum* of human life is the mental reflex of the physical causality. It is the doctrine that the human mind works the way the universe works. The physical universe works according to the law of cause and effect. The

brain and the nervous system which serves as the means of inter-relation between the organism and its environment is conscious of causality in nature. Besides, the causal determinism of physical nature has its echo in the human "mind", and it too thinks in terms of cause and effect. Rationalism must not therefore be confused with reasonability. It merely connoted the capacity and mental propensity to be rational. The laws of the mind are no less unchanging than those of the universe."

Because of the "red thread" we find that rationalism is present in the entire biological process of evolution even though in a rudimentary form. Not infrequently lower animals are thus found to direct in varying proportions their actions intelligently towards their intended ends even against the urge of their inherited habits. The process then continues in man. At the lowest intellectual stage of man we find the expression of his rational mind in magic which sought the causes of natural phenomena in nature itself and conceived it as a series of events occurring in an invariable order without the intervention of any supernatural agency. Magic was thus akin to science in outlook. Magic then gave way to religion when man found from experience that it could not deliver the goods. At that stage of primitive knowledge religion was the appropriate expression of the innate rationality of man. Failing to control the forces of nature he now thought of *propitiating* them. Our increasing knowledge has given birth to science with which human rationality has reached its culminating point. Even the modern science of psychoanalysis which has glorified so much the irrational forces lying hidden in man takes its stand on rationalism for it too thinks in terms of cause and effect. Rationalisation does not deny the rational process. It is only a wrong use of the rational process either through ignorance or intentionally under the influence of evil desires.

Such a wrong use of the human rationality is, however, possible when the conclusion drawn cannot be easily verified. It generally occurs in the case of human affairs, particularly in the affairs of man in society. That is why the science of human ethics is still in a very undeveloped state. But the correspondence theory of truth can be easily applied in the physical nature.

the facts of which can be isolated and subjected to experimentation. Physical science has accordingly made a rapid progress and has made man great by giving him control over the physical forces and removing progressively the restraints upon the unfoldment of his potentialities. For this control Aurobindo looked to yoga.

The urge for freedom provides the basic incentive to acquire more and more knowledge and discover truths. Truth is thus not merely an abstract value. It is the content of knowledge—the correspondence of a mental idea to the specific item of the external world. This rationalist interpretation of truth by Roy is intellectually akin to the interpretation of 'sat' by Uddalaka Aruni, a heretic stage of the *Chhandogya Upanisad*. We have already seen that Gandhi and Aurobindo gave an idealistic interpretation of the term and followed in the footsteps of Samkara and Ramanuja. But Uddalaka upheld the Samkhya doctrine of *satkaryavad* and tried to give a materialistic interpretation of the 'sat'.

Before we conclude, it may be mentioned that instincts and reflex actions are not denials of reason. Rationalism economises time and energy in this way. The race has done these things so often in the past that we now continue to perform them without thinking any more about them. When instincts, etc. are harnessed to the service of reason, reason may be left free to perform its other essential tasks. These must not therefore be regarded as substitutes for reason.

Morality: The tremendous power that reason has given to man is, however, ethically neutral, and it is likely to be misused unless man himself proves reasonable. We have already seen how the pecuniary interests of society have exploited applied science to promote their sectional welfare. It shows that man should be not only great. He must also be good. Besides, even the goodness of man paves the way for his greatness because living in cooperation with others is the *sine qua non* of waging his struggle for existence successfully. The question of the goodness of man brings in focus attention on human morality and ethics.

The traditional basis of morality is religion but with the

undermining of religion to-day morality has also been rapidly losing its hold upon the human mind, thus precipitating the contemporary crisis in human civilisation. That is why Roy felt the supreme need of finding an alternative source and sanction for morality. He has found it in man. The theory of the ordering of the society is indeed the natural corollary to one's theory of the ordering of the universe. As has already been seen, Aurobindo, following his theory of supramentalism, did not attach much importance to morality. Gandhi did it but he spoke of the divine origin of morality. Roy contradicted both.

Roy was of opinion that the conception of *ought* is not on a qualitatively different footing from that of *is* nor any unique faculty of man like intuition or moral will recognises it. *Ought*-values do not inhere in objects *per se*. To Roy *ought* is only a short-cut way of stating that 'this is the necessary procedure to be followed for producing the desired result'. Thus when a man is told that he ought not to over-eat, what is meant is that it is necessary for the man to observe this rule if he intends to avoid indigestion. Similarly, morality is needed to enable us to live in cooperation with others. Just as traffic rules are needed to ensure the safe and maximum flow of traffic, so the moral rules are required to serve the maximum interest of the maximum number of people in society. Our *ought* thus grows out of *is*. The *is* is the intention and the *ought* is the means of fulfilling it.

Generally our moral judgments appear to be immediate and intuitive because they are built into us by social conventions, and we pitch them up in the same way as we do our language. Our ancestors approved of some forms of conduct because they were considered to be useful but in course of time we have forgotten the original reasons and have come to value them as ends in themselves. Morality thus evolves according to our needs but if we find some durable elements of morality common to all forms of social organisation, this is because they are indispensable for the very existence of the society as such and the successive stages of social development represent one historical development.

From experience man comes to know what is good or what

is bad for him. Then his rationality which has rendered the human mind capable of conceptual thought has led him to integrate into general rules of conduct. These rules now constitute the standard to which individuals are expected to conform, and this enables them to know how others are likely to behave under identical circumstances. The ground is thus prepared for reciprocity and mutual understanding on a large scale which facilitates the growth of social life. By accepting a moral code we not only override the apparent dictates of our self-interest but also abide by the long-term interest of everyone alike. At the same time we become more able to cooperate with one another in pursuing our individual ends. In fact, moral rules are needed for achieving a coordination between one's short-term and long term aims no less than between the aims of different people. It is rationality which enables a man to get this insight into the nature of the moral code and encourage him to be reasonable in human dealings. And what is reasonable is *ipso facto* good. By trying to base morality on human reason Roy has tied himself to the classical Greek tradition.⁷

But the basis of morality is not in reason alone. Man has also imbibed his moral propensity, like his rationality, from the universe out of which he has evolved. The universe is not merely law-governed. It has a gravitational force too, as a result of which material bodies attract one another. The biological world which has evolved from the physical world has inherited this law of mutual attraction. A good deal of mutual aid is thus discernible among lower animals as well. In their cases these acts of mutual aid are, however, confined to concrete cases only. But man, as we have just seen, has brought these isolated cases under some general concepts which has made an extensive social life possible. Besides, the harmony of nature has also its echo in the human mind and enthruses him to live in harmony and cooperation with one another. The "red thread" is there. The Darwinian concept of the struggle for existence indeed means in effect struggle against the adverse environment, and the fittest for survival are those who have learnt to combine in mutual support. Rationalistic ethics and naturalistic ethics thus reinforce each other.

It is, of course, true that the force of repulsion is also there which accounts for the existence of anti-social impulses in man. But the force of repulsion is a force subsidiary to that of attraction. So the anti-social impulses of man are also subsidiary to his social propensities. In this connection we may recall the well-known Kantian dictum that the evil is parasitic upon good. Sometimes some of us can afford to be anti-social because most of the people lead a social life most of the time. Anti-social impulses have, however, in their turn added to the glory of man. It reflects credit on man since he has to be good in spite of temptations and not because of their absence. In this respect he is even greater than the gods for there no temptations in heaven and the gods have no option but to be good there.

The modern sociological view of evil also lends support to the aforesaid philosophical view of it. The sociological view of evil is that it is a historical growth embodied in institutions, customs and laws. Man is born good but society makes him bad. The way to reform him is therefore to reform his society.

Will : The problem of ethics is two-fold problem of knowledge and problem of character. We must think freely and choose among the available alternatives. Again, a mere intellectual recognition of an act as good does not *by itself* produce any corresponding action. We must possess the will to do it and in the process conquer all temptations to do otherwise. Basically it is the question of free will. We must therefore first have to account for the appearance of free will in an otherwise determined universe.

There is a school of philosophy known as tychism which holds that chance has an objective existence and plays an important role in the world process along with determinism. Both necessity (determinism) and contingency (chance) are regarded as fundamental traits of nature and are complimentary categories. A scientific law assumes the form of if-then relation. *If* such and such things happen, then such and such consequences will follow. But there is no compulsion that the *if* in question will take place at some particular point in time and space. There are separate cause and effect streams in which determinism rules but the meeting of two or more independently initiated event-series

is not so determined. Alternate possibilities are thus inherent in nature from the very beginning. It has its continuity in the emerging biological world, and they are fully exploited with the advent of an intelligent creature like man. The happening of a specific *if* now depends upon either chance or human decision.

It is obvious that Roy could not subscribe fully to this doctrine of tychism. To him even a chance event is not an uncaused event. He believed in the uniformity of nature and thus viewed chance not as something which occurs without a cause but which occurs without our knowledge of the cause definitely determining it. It is because there is a complex of causal events in which indefinitely various combinations are possible and there is hardly any possibility of knowing what particular combinations will occur, no forecasting of the corresponding effects are, however, not only unknown at present but at least some of them must ever remain so for the forces at play are too many and too various for human intelligence to calculate.

But Roy has had no doubt that even when a definite calculation is ruled out for complex cases, assessment of general tendencies is quite possible. In such cases he came to pin his faith in the theory of probability based upon the mathematical doctrine of combinations. The chance of any event may therefore be represented in terms of a ratio with its numerator indicating the number of combinations capable of producing the event and the denominator the total number of combinations, favourable as well as unfavourable. There may be varying degrees of probability, and in large aggregates probability merges into Certainty. So Roy concluded that determinism and probability are not mutually exclusive concepts, probability being the dynamic view of determinism. According to him, the laws of being are laws of strict causality whereas the laws of becoming are laws of probability.

When we come to deal with ultimate particles called electrons, we are only faced with the fundamental difficulty of measurement. Here the very act of measurement affects the things to be measured. Suppose a man wants to find out how cold an object is by touching it with his hand but every time he tries to do it, the heat of his hand causes it to melt. The same

sort of situation is created in attempts to measure the tiny electron—its speed and position. It has led some religiously inclined scientists to assume that the electron obeys no law and there is a mysterious indeterminism at the heart of the universe. On the basis of this assumption a hypothesis has been put forward in an explanation of the free will that the mind operates through two or three key items in the brain. Roy rejected this theory of electronic indeterminism in the same way he rejected the doctrine of tychism. He contended that "a collective order cannot be founded upon chaotic individuals", and the so-called theory of electronic indeterminism is only "the surreptitious transfer of the uncertainty of our knowledge to the object of knowledge". In the case of electrons too Roy was in favour of interpreting determinism in terms of probability. Anyhow, the concept of determinism has to be retained in science because otherwise its very foundation will be blasted.

To explain the emergence of the human mind Roy counted much upon the biological theory of mutation. Mutations are major chance variations having survival value. It has since reinforced the Darwinian theory of evolution.

In this way Roy sought to integrate the traditional view of the freedom of the human mind with the scientific view of nature but without denying the inner experience of man. His position was thus a compromise position of moderate determinism. As a determinist he reiterated that each human behaviour originates in stimuli and has thus an immediate cause. But at the same time Roy conceded that a human self is more than a mere complex of stimuli and responses. The self really represents a new creative synthesis whose actions are determined more by its own nature than by external forces. In fact, a man's decisions originate in his total self—his character and habits which are in turn largely formed by previous reactions to the external world.

For Roy, therefore, man has ethical freedom and ethical responsibility. He believed that there is no cosmic or objective design in the universe and man is an accidental product of its blind evolutionary process. But since man is an evolved product of nature, there is an underlying continuity between the two and man may be taken to have inherited the important ingred-

ients of his character from nature. Mother nature has thus equipped man with such basic qualities as love for freedom, rationality and moral sense which have made man virtually self-sufficient in character. By using them he can very well create an environment congenial to his well-being and happiness. And since all men are born of a common process out of the background of law-governed nature, these ingredients are common to them. If there are variations between one personality and other, it is because of heredity, environment and training just as the light will pass in greater or lesser intensity through a piece of cloth spread before a burning light according as the texture of the cloth varies from place to place.

Roy thus thought in terms of an essential common nature of man. This essence concept gives man an ultimate consciousness of what he is. When therefore Roy spoke of man as the measure of all things, he meant man as a species and not of men as individuals. When again he said that man is alone in this universe, this loneliness is not so much of individuals men as of mankind as a whole. Individuals themselves are, however, not alone. They tend to cooperate mutually to promote individual and collective welfare. The cosmic aloneness of man is thus amply compensated. Besides, human essence exists in individuals only as potentialities, and an individual creates a specific essence for him by utilising those potentialities in formulating his own life-goals and making his own decisions. He can therefore render his life worth-living if he finds, for himself and in himself, meaning in certain pursuits. Happiness is, after all, to come as a by-product of these pursuits.

The function of the free will of man in particular cases is, however, connected with his emotion and impulse. Those values alone which are felt with emotion and followed with conviction can lead to action. The function of emotions is to serve as the connecting link between intellect and will.

But, following the Socratic model, Roy appears to have thought that reason is not static. Knowledge itself is thus preparation for action. When a deer receives impressions connected with a tiger, its nostrils dilate and its muscles become taut in preparation for appropriate movements. As we ascend

the evolutionary process, we find that the crucial thinking of the earliest men was how to adapt themselves to the environment and his most important knowledge was harnessed to this fundamental need. Similarly the life of modern men is connected with the application of the scientific knowledge in the shape of machinery, etc. for the purpose of maintaining the human existence as agreeably as possible. The theoretical adventures of human rationality are thus practical both in their germ and their fruit. Even in Indian philosophy *jñāna* or knowledge is viewed as a *mārga* or path which means that knowledge is considered as a way of moving towards the ideal.

Implications for man: Roy's philosophy has developed as an ally of science. But he was not concerned with the facts of science as such. He has only thought out their philosophical implications and has deduced his philosophy in the process. His philosophy has indeed proved to be a clearing house for the reports of various sciences. Roy has analysed and combined them soothing out as far as possible the contradictions in and between them and filling up the gaps with the relevant surmises of his own.

A great furore has been created in the contemporary world in favour of the idealistic interpretations of modern science by some religion-oriented scientists. It is but natural. For the custodians of supernaturalism are highly organised. Their organisations are also richly endowed and world-wide in scope. Enormous personnel are working day and night for propagating their views. But we should not omit to see that not all sciences which have denigrated reason have advocated a religious and idealistic view of life and that the reports from different sciences do not support each other. Thus the reports from the schools of modern psychology are flatly opposed to the idealistic interpretations of the reports from modern physics and biology. The latter have highlighted the mind but psychoanalysis has done **precisely the contrary.**

Roy has, however, rejected both the interpretations of the reports from physics and biology on the one hand and those from psychoanalysis on the other. According to him, among the qualification man has inherited from Mother Earth,

reason constituted the *summum bonum* of his life, and he has sought to explain the entire being and becoming of man in its light. The present civilisation is the product of human rationality, and if it requires any rectification now, we shall have to do it with the help of reason. We thus find in Roy one of the great champions of human rationality when anti-rationalist forces are rampant. The strength of the contemporary anti-rationalist camp can be gauged from the fact that even professional philosophers have now joined hands with the amateur scientist-philosophers in search of God to denigrate human reason. In Europe the critical thought of the 19th century challenged the *a priori* speculative system of the classical philosophy and thus set the human spirit free from the bondage of the venerable belief that the solution of the problems of life could be deduced from the abstract first principles in the light of "right reason." But the baby too was thrown away along with the bath-water. With the rejection of the metaphysical concept of "right reason" rationalism itself was rejected and replaced by all sorts of mystical urges as the fundamental guiding principle of life.

The urge for freedom, rationality, will and morality—these are enlisted by Roy as the essential characteristics of human nature with which man can mould his destiny. Now these concepts are as old as humanity itself. But so far these have only a transcendental reference. In this context what is new about Roy's philosophy is that he has sought to trace them all to a common biological origin. In fact, he called for a new view of man's relationship with the natural world.

Thus although Roy has called himself a materialist, his philosophical position is really that of naturalist. Naturalism wants the single category of nature to encompass all that exists in space and time—the totality of processes and things, organic as well as inorganic. It holds that there is only one order of existence and does not accept anything as super-natural and sub-natural. Even if matter is the basis of whatever exists, it does not exhaust what exists. Man's thoughts and values are also parts of the materialist world which has become self-conscious, mind being not an intrusion from outside of nature.

New Humanism has taken its start from where the earlier variety of humanism ended. A rationalist philosophy is naturally dependent on the advance of science. The philosophy of Roy represents a coordination of the entire product of human thought that has accumulated in the different departments of science for the last two or three hundred years since the European Renaissance and thus brings to a culmination a process of thought that was inherent in the advent of *homo sapiens* on the world scene.

Human beings value themselves more highly than they do other forms of life. It is as proper for them to think in this way as it would be proper for any other kind of animals, *given the ability*, to do so. Such a self-centred view of the world taken by man is known as anthropocentrism (from the Greek *anthropos* meaning 'human'). Basically humanism is a kind of anthropocentrism.

The ability to glorify himself demands of man an understanding of his species and its immense potentialities. But at the time of the European Renaissance when sciences like biology, psychology and anthropology were still only in incipient stages, man remained mostly unexplained and continued to be a mere sentimentalised mystery. Man was then accorded a place in the hierarchy of life that had set them apart from the rest of creation even if he was no longer regarded as an object of divine purpose.

It is towards the close of the 15th century that European explorers encountered the great apes—first the chimpanzees of West Africa, later the orangutang of Sumatra and Borneo and finally the gorilla of Central Africa. Hereafter, the European's view of the human species began undergoing a change but Darwin's *Descent of man* was published some four centuries later and the biochemical proofs of a close relationship between man and ape came still later. We know to-day that the chasm separating man from lower animals is not so wide as it once appeared. The human uniqueness consists in difference in degree only. Man exhibits *more* of certain behaviours than other animals. It must be said to the credit of Roy that even starting from the animal ancestry of man he could visualise a brilliant destiny for man. This philosophy of New Humanism is meant to be the ideology of the new Renaissance movement started by Roy.

NOTES

1. The Quantum Theory and the Relativity Theory constitute what is called New Physics.
2. Some biologists headed by Bergson joined the idealist fray. But if intellect is free to carve objects out of the basically homogenous flux, why do we not carve out only those objects which are pleasing to us? That we cannot do so shows that facts exist.
3. For a fuller treatment of the subject see the author's *Political Thought of M. N. Roy*. Chapter X — "Two Rival Conceptions of Materialism".
4. Science depends for its accuracy on the precision of experimental measurements. But it has proved impossible to fix both the position and the speed of an electron at one and the same time. Suppose that a man tries to find out how cold some object is by touching it with his hand, and everytime he reaches out to touch it, the heat of the hand causes it to melt. Exactly this happens to attempts to measure an electron. This is a fundamental difficulty of measurement. The problem is thus epistemological and not ontological. Although it is now impossible to predict the movement of an electron, the movement of large-scale bodies is determined and predictions on them remain valid.

Here it may be further noted that materialism is still the invariable method of even those scientists who denounce materialism philosophically. In fact, science as an organised body of knowledge would be impossible without this method.

5. Roy's *Science and Philosophy*, pp. 130-131.
6. See Debasis Ghose's article "Rationality and Religion" in *Radical Humanist* for October, 1976.
7. See Tamasree Dhar's article "Religion, Reason and Morality" in *Radical Humanist* for April, 1976. Also the author's article "Humanist Ethics—Greek approach" in the same journal for March, 1972.

CHAPTER VI

ROLE OF MAN IN HISTORY

HISTORY DEALS with human actions. One's philosophy of history will therefore result from what significance one attaches to human actions. To a very great extent it is bound up with one's subjective estimate of what ought to be. Thus if a historian thinks or feels that certain ethical, political, economic or artistic excellences should exist, he will seek and discover them as the real springs of human action in history. This is the case because historical causes are not to be found on the surface or force themselves into notice. These have to be brought to light with historic insight and sympathetic imagination. Moreover, the collection of data is the first task of a historian, and since facts are infinite in number, some principle of selection is essential. Now, what this principle will be depends upon the life-philosophy of the historian concerned. That is why history has been characterised as philosophy teaching by examples. Viewed in this perspective, history is a science of criticism.

Man is at the centre of Roy's philosophy of New Humanism. Man is not only the measure of judging the merit of all special institutions but he is also the agent of creating his institutions. Man's urge for freedom supplies the dynamism of his actions, and his rationality points the way in which he can achieve the desired objective. In this way man makes his own history. His freedom in this respect may not be unlimited, there being many natural, geographical, socio-economical and even personal limiting factors. There may also be other accidental factors. But still the range of his freedom is certainly wide and getting wider and wider with the increasing acquisition of knowledge. At least his life's journey must not be taken to be along a single railway-track which will take him onto some fixed station and will not permit him to swerve on the way.

Roy, as we have seen, has a mathematico-mechanical conception of nature. According to him, human history is also

determined but only in the sense that it is not arbitrary or mysterious. There were factors operative in producing a particular event, and of these factors human ideas were most important. Whatever happened in the past and is happening at present has to be explained in terms of cause and effect. This task of explanation is what distinguishes history from a mere chronology. Incidentally it may be mentioned here that Marx has also regarded history not only as a determined, but also a pre-determined, process in which productive forces are almost the sole determining factor. The human urge and will have hardly any significant role to play in its unfolding. In contrast, Roy has accepted human will and aspirations as the most powerful determining factor in human history.

With Roy the urge for freedom is basically a romantic urge—a yearning for the desirable. Reason shows man in what way and how far the yearning can be fulfilled under the given conditions. “Romanticism tempered with reason” and “rationalism enlivened by the romantic spirit of adventure” pave the road to successful “revolution” which amounts to remoulding the social environment of man for a progressive removal of restraints upon the unfoldment of his potentialities. Roy has sought to re-interpret the European history since the Renaissance in the light of these general principles in his last testament in two volumes—*Reason, Romanticism and Revolution*.

But it is the ideas which determine the direction in which human will will be exercised. The importance of the word ‘idea’ in the vocabulary of philosophy is due to Plato who emphasised their relation to the Divine mind. God ‘makes’ ideas, ‘contemplates’ them and ‘uses them as models’ in creation. Roy, however, did not use the word in this or any other metaphysical sense. His ideas are human ideas which have a physical origin. Ideation is a “physiological process” resulting from the simple awareness of the environment “supplemented by reactions to the things of which the organism becomes aware”. The nervous system of man including his brain establishes the relation between him and his environment out of which ideas are born. Ideas often arise in brain also in response to the requirements of a given situation.

As we know, lower animals too react to their environment¹. Thus when a stag is frightened, it takes to heels. Its long legs and stripped body help it to fly and remain hidden in a jungle. This reaction is, however, more instinctively, than consciously, rational. But a primitive man might have advanced one step further. He might break the branch of a tree and attack his enemy with it. Here, of course, he reacted more rationally than instinctively but his action remained exclusively limited to the concrete result of a particular situation. At a later stage man with a developed brain has become capable of forming conceptual thought and *general* ideas expressed in language to which only there can be human *general* reactions². Such ideas can only motivate a collectivity to action, and these can be handed down from generation to generation with the necessary improvements in them. In mankind the *social* heritage of man plays a very important part supplementary to that of the *natural* inheritance enregistered in the germplasm. Human behaviour-experiences are accumulated and stored in the form of ideas. A phonograph too does so. But this kind of mechanistic storing is altogether different from that through ideas because ideas can be used by man for the construction of other new ideas. A phonograph cannot do it.

What motion is to matter, ideas are to history. To be self-operative matter must have motion within it. In the same way social evolution should have within it some factor which will serve as the driving force of history. According to Roy, human ideas constitute this driving force, and he wanted to re-define historical materialism after incorporating the creative role of ideas in it. It is because ideas precede action, revolutionary ideas must precede all revolutionary actions and stimulate historical development. That is why Roy never felt wary of emphasising the importance of a Renaissance movement for an undeveloped country like India.

Roy argued that ideas are not merely the superstructure of the economic base. Any direct relation can hardly be established between the rise of an ideology and that of a particular class even though it is not unlikely that an ideology can sometimes be utilised by a class for promoting its own interest. Thus we find

that in Europe the middle decades of the 19th century saw a marked tendency towards materialism and empiricism. But by way of reaction it gave rise to a strong tendency towards idealistic philosophy at the next phase. In fact, philosophical idealism had a golden age during the fifty years or so in the wake of the publication of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* in 1781. Then again a reaction set in against idealism and in favour of realism and materialism. Again we see to-day a renewed interest in some sort of idealistic view of the universe on the basis of the findings of modern physics and modern biology.

It very often happens that when man is confronted with a critical situation, he feels an urge for freedom and tries to develop a new philosophy from out of the store of existing human thoughts. A new idea must therefore be referred back to an old one, and a philosophy should be viewed more as the continuation and elaboration of the ideas of the previous thinkers than as a superstructure of a socio-economic base. Ideas have dynamics and logic of their own. They develop according to the inner necessity of man and not under the impact of social forces. Thus we know that many of the pioneers of modern science were priests living in monasteries. While developing scientific knowledge they undermined their own religious mode of thought. This shows the dynamics of ideas.

Here it may be pointed out that changes in the methods of production were taken by Marx to be the prime causes for producing changes in ideologies but he had left completely unexplained the reasons for which production methods underwent changes from time to time. Marx did not want to see that these changes were all brought about by "intellectual causes", i. e., scientific invention and discoveries. It was the growth of modern science after the Renaissance which led to modern industry.

In fact, man as a thinking animal is far more powerful than man as a producing animal. His brain is the best means of production because it produces ideas, the most iconoclastic of all commodities. Roy thus came to allot an independent and autonomous role to ideas in the process of social evolution. He called it the dynamics of ideas. Once ideas are formed, they

exist "by themselves governed by their own laws". There appears to be a Hegelian taint in this part of Roy's philosophy but they, unlike the dialectical logic, do not operate independently of human will and reason.

But although Roy ruled out Hegelian dialectics, he found the key to the dynamics of ideas in their conflict. He divided ideas into two broad categories—one category representing the rationalist mode of thought and the other the religious mode of thought. The former is the source of inspiration for all libertarian movements while the latter has anti-libertine implications. Roy thus saw the Renaissance and the Reformation of modern Europe not at all as class ideologies, bourgeoisie and feudal, but as a continuation of the age-old conflict between rational and irrational (religious) forces. He naturally found the successful termination of man's struggle for freedom at a particular stage in the victory of the forces of rationalism over those of irrationalism.

The recognition of the dynamic role of ideas did not, however, lead Roy to dismiss the influence of economic factors altogether. What he contended is that in the process of social evolution human ideas should *also* be given due importance along with the economic factors. Born out of matter, mind becomes as real and objective a force as matter itself. The dynamics of ideas and the dynamics of economic development, according to Roy, are two parallel processes. Both have a *common denominator* as both grow out of the human urge for freedom. Then as society progresses they continue to influence each other. The two histories—the history of thought and the history of social events—are so much intertwined at some periods that it becomes extremely difficult to disentangle them which gives rise to a confusion about their interaction. Roy held that we can reconstruct a viable society only on the basis of a social theory which gives recognition, among other things, to the double process originating from the self-same source.

Man thus makes his own history by bringing all his capacities into action. He, as we have seen, is more or less a self-sufficient being and has imbibed from nature all the basic ingredients needed for moulding his destiny.

AUROBINDO

If Roy has sought to project man on the vista of historical process, Aurobindo, true to his philosophy has found in human history only the projection of the Divine—not any drive for the self-expression of man but “a progressive self-expression, a manifestation, an evolving self-development” of *Sachchidananda*.

Aurobindo conceived an idealistic interpretation of history not merely in the sense that ideas play a predominant role in the process of history but also that ideas are prior to matter.³ Accordingly they do not originate in human brains. Aurobindo's account of ideas is essentially that of Plato although the vocabulary he has used and the emphasis he has given on the dynamism of ideas is something new. Plato's ideas are laid in the heaven as eternal and immutable models. Aurobindo similarly conceived a higher order designated as the Real-Idea which is distinguished from the simple idea. The Real-Idea belongs to the realm of the Supermind whereas the idea is of the mental plane below the Supermind.

The idea and the Will-Force are separated but the Real-Idea possess in itself the spiritual dynamism inherent in the higher Reality. It has “a mastering will for self-fulfilment” and does not rest unless it has established itself in permanent concrete forms.⁴ Even if ideas may make interests their “subordinate helpers” and an idea may enhance the chance of its realisability by identifying itself with some powerful interest or interests, ultimately its strength is derived from its genesis in the Truth-conscious Real-Idea. For the same reason, according to Aurobindo, an idea which is false or half-truth like absolutism or theocracy, even though successful for the time being, will not have permanent status in the historical process of man. Like Roy, Aurobindo thus spoke of the dynamism of ideas but these ideas are those of the Supermind and not of the human mind.

Aurobindo started his theory of social evolution as the self-expression of *Sachchidananda* with the historiography of Lamprecht, who was a philosopher of Germany, that venerable land of Hegelianism. According to him, there is “a sort of psychological cycle” through which the human history must advance

and there are certain stages of the cycle—symbolic, typal, conventional, individualist and subjectivist. Aurobindo finds the concepts of these five stages very useful for enunciating his philosophy of history.

(1) *Symbolic stage*: So far as India is concerned, Aurobindo took the Vedic age to be symbolic because the Vedic society centred round religious sacrifices which were rather mystically symbolic. Not merely the actual worship but also the social institutions of the time were penetrated through with the symbolic spirit. Take, for example, the institution of *Varna* system. The four castes were taken to have originated from the different parts of the Creator's body. For the Vedic people the human society was "an attempt to express in life the Cosmic Purusha" who has expressed himself otherwise in the material and the supra-physical universe. It was predominantly a spiritual age, and the religious forms and observances were subordinate to the imperatives of the Spirit. The symbol was indeed more pronounced than the sense it symbolised. The whole community was now viewed as the projection of the Divine in the world⁵.

(2) *Typal stage*: In course of time the symbolic yielded place to the type. What was spiritual and religious degenerated into psychological and ethical. *Dharma* now sought justification from its social utility, and the ethical motive and discipline derived their mystic sanction from religion. The rest took a more and more other-worldly turn.

(3) *Conventional stage*: At this stage the four *varnas* lost their original purity and became the "emptiest formal-

(4) *Individualist Stage*: With the complete eclipse of the 'soul' of the Vedic symbol and with the complete drying up of the 'life' of the type, the dead 'form' alone with its tyranny of convention came to prevail against which there was the inevitable revolt paving the way for the assertion of individualism and rationality. The huge debris of past formulations like the dead church, the dead social institutions, etc. has to be cleared first, and the reason of individuals was a good demolisher.

On the positive side also reason has some sure gains to its credit. In Europe reason has given birth to science. It has also created great social ideals like democracy and social justice and has led to the realisation of the importance of the individual as such. But an overdose of rationalism has also created a hydra-headed collectivist state and a beehive-kind of human society. A thermo-nuclear war is further threatening the very existence of mankind. Naturally there has not set in a reaction against reason and science. The awakened East should not therefore repeat the experience of the West in its entirety.

(5) *Subjective stage*: The next future stage of social evolution must therefore be subjectivist in nature. Objectivism based on analytical reason takes an external and mechanical view of the entire thing. On the contrary, subjectivism comes from within and looks upon everything from the viewpoint of "a containing and developing" self-consciousness. Since the law is within ourselves, life is "a self-creating progress". "The whole impulse of subjectivism", said Aurobindo, "is to get at the self, to see by the self, to live out the truth of the self internally and externally but always from an internal initiation and centre". In an ideal society therefore the individual will have to grow from within but without at the same time interfering with the growth of other fellow-men in his group. The individual must learn to integrate his life with the life of his immediate social aggregate and the latter is to harmonise its life with that of other and larger aggregates and ultimately humanity as a whole. The growth envisaged here is spiritual growth which Aurobindo has called spiritual freedom.

The Ideal of Human Unity too examines the problem of the 'collective man' more in political than in sociological terms in the global context and not in the context of group and religion. The two treatises, viz. *The Human Cycle* and *The Ideal of Human Unity* taken together give a complete picture of Aurobindo's version of the future possibilities of 'man'.

Finally, we would like to point out that Aurobindo's conception of social development is a movement of upward evolutionary progress not in a continually advancing straight line but in a series of cycles of spirals in which periods of pro-

gress may alternate with those of retrogression. But even the periods of retrogression are not, according to him, altogether periods of decline because some necessary elements of perfection lacking in the earlier periods are worked out at that time so that the new curve of progress is eventually resumed at a higher level.

GANDHI

If Aurobindo had a spiritualist conception of history, Gandhi had a moralist conception. Gandhi himself, of course, wrote that human history is "a ceaseless growth, an unfoldment in terms of spirituality", and he also spoke of a "spiritual law" expressing itself through the ordinary activities of life.⁶ But by spirituality Gandhi meant here only "the affirmation of an eternal moral order". Unlike Aurobindo, he did not envisage spiritual order beyond the religious-cum-moral order. Gandhi and Aurobindo used the term 'spirituality' in two different senses.

Like any other ordinary religious man, Gandhi believed in the theory of divine determinism in history. He asserted that "ultimately it is the Unseen Power that governs the course of events—even in the minds of men who make . . . these events". He made similar statements on many occasions. Gandhi further thought that the law of karma too restricts human freedom. But these should be taken at least as *conceptual* restrictions upon the freedom of man and it certainly affects the image of man.

The twin values to which Gandhi owed primary allegiance were truth and non-violence. But, as we have seen already, he is far more concerned with the ethical aspect of the truth than with its ontological and epistemological aspect, and in his view truth as an ethical category has merged in his concept of non-violence. In human history Gandhi has found a steady progress towards *ahimsa*. He wrote, "Our remote ancestors were cannibals. Then came a time when they became fed up with cannibalism and they began to live with flesh. Next came a stage when man was ashamed to lead the life of a wandering

hunter. He therefore took to agriculture and depended principally on mother earth for his food. Thus from being a nomad he settled down to civilised stable life, founded villages and towns, and from member of a family he became member of a community and a nation. All these are signs of progressive *ahimsa* and diminishing *himsa*.”⁸ He interpreted the Kurukshetra war as a symbolic war between the forces of good and the forces of evil, and allowing to him, the *Gita* also preaches the message of non-violence. Gandhi has thus made not only God but also history in his own mental image.

Gandhi, however, did not entertain a unilinear view of historical progress. He was of opinion that progress is not “like a train which, once started, keeps on moving”. He appears to have looked upon human history in the nature a spiral-like movement that is determined more by spirit than by matter. In that case the position of Gandhi may be taken to be analogous to that of Aurobindo. Like Aurobindo, Gandhi too held that even if human history does not follow “one straight road” and that there are occasional interruptions on the road, human history has progressed on the whole. But while the Yogi of Pondicherry interpreted this progress as the march of mankind towards the Supramental stage, the Saint of Sabarmati has assessed it mainly in terms of non-violence. The former thus stood for spiritual progress which is alleged to be beyond moral progress but the latter remained satisfied merely with moral progress which he accepted as the ultimate goal of mankind. Gandhi believed that if man has so far progressed steadily towards non-violence, he is destined to progress towards it “still further”.

Thus we find that in the historiologies of both Aurobindo and Gandhi alike, as in their cosmologies and philosophies of life, the role of man has been minimised to glorify that of God. On the world-stage man has been taken to be merely dancing to the tune of a Pied Piper. If the world is created by a Supernatural Power, it cannot certainly be re-made without His assistance. This conviction or rather lack of conviction contradicts the firm contention of Roy that there is no First Cause and that man freed from the bondage of religion and

supernaturalism can play a decisive role in the transformation of the world.

NOTES

1. Darwin in his *Descent of Man*, particularly in its chapters on 'Comparison of the Mental Powers of Man and the Lower Animals' has shown the fundamental identity between the mental apparatus of the lowest and the highest organisms. He has proved that the development of mind in its early stages and also in certain directions of development is revealed "most adequately" in the animals. Stimulus from without and response from within involving adaptation to needs explain the processes linking man, animal and plant. In fact, we find in the behaviour of lower organisms a "faint copy of all we know as consciousness in ourselves". The mental activity which is so powerful in man is more or less recognisable in many animals too even if it has not become more than a slender rill. If it were not so, man would appear as a discontinuity in organic evolution, and the drama of animal life would appear as a magical puppet show.
2. Socrates maintained that the statement that what was just under these circumstances is unjust under those circumstances becomes meaningless unless what is meant by 'just' is the same in both cases.
3. *Speeches*, pp. 111-112.
4. *Ideal of Human Unity*, p. 228.
5. According to Aurobindo, the third and the fourth Mandates contain many subtle suggestions about the symbolism of the Veda. *Evening Talks (Third Series)*, pp. 114-115.
6. *Young India* dated 3.9.25 and 16.9.26. Vol II.
7. Pyarelal's *Mahatma Gandhi : The Last Phase*, p. 138.
8. *Harjan* dated 11.8.40.

(B) INSTITUTIONAL ASPECT

We shall now take up the other aspect of the alienation—the alienation aspect. As we have already observed, a new philosophy alone would not succeed in giving back to man his lost identity and control over his institutions. Some institutional adjustments are also imperative which brings in the question of social engineering.

In this respect we may start with our institutions as they examine them and then introduce reforms to make them work better. If the reforms misfire, the damage is not great; and a fresh re-adjustment is possible. This sort of piecemeal social engineering proceeds on the basis of trial and error and is mainly the task of a social technologist. On the other hand, we may look into the basic issues of social life and prescribe an *alternative* set of institutions. This type of utopian social engineering is the task of a social scientist. His social science follows from the basic philosophy of his life. Here we may mention that all great periods of history have utopian images. A utopian believes that progress consists in the realisation of a succession of utopias, the utopia of to-day being the reality of to-morrow.

Viewed in this perspective, Gandhi and Roy should be regarded as social scientists. Both of them have a good deal of social engineering to their credit. But in this respect Aurobindo's position is somewhat unique. He pinned his faith in the evolution of a new race of Supermen possessing superhuman powers. They are thought capable of establishing *our* type of institutions and make them work satisfactorily. Aurobindo therefore did not indulge much in social engineering. But Although Aurobindo took little interest in social engineering, he had a good deal of utopian social thought to his credit.

With these preliminary observations, we shall now proceed to consider the socio-political thought of our three leaders.

a) SOCIAL THOUGHT OF AUROBINDO

Let us take the case of Aurobindo first

As a part of his general philosophy Aurobindo has also formulated a social philosophy. His conception of the fundamental nature of man is distinctly a spiritual one, and he thought of divining man both in his individual and collective aspects. According to Aurobindo, the nature of the human society and the nature of the individual man are closely akin. Both have a soul which is their real self and are to arrive at an identical goal after passing through different stages of evolution.

In fact, the concept of supramental consciousness, which forms the keynote of his philosophy, informs his social thought as well. In his *Life Divine* and *Synthesis of Yoga* Aurobindo was concerned more with the individual while in his *Human Cycle* and *Ideal of Human Unity* he had dealt with the human aggregate.

Since Aurobindo believed in spiritualising the existing institutions of man, he has not shown much interest in re-creating them or creating new ones. He reiterated that man is not a machine in his constitution and functioning as such he cannot be saved by machinery. So there is hardly any necessity of creating or re-creating institutions. But under the social philosophy of Aurobindo there is not also much possibility of creating new institutions and the like for institutions develop in obedience to the laws of history and the course of history is largely pre-determined. Aurobindo accordingly views the birth of the supramental community along with that of the Supermen as "decreed and inevitable" although this consummation would need the sincere *sadhana* of a number of individuals.

So, instead of social engineering, Aurobindo concentrated almost wholly on divinising the prevailing institutions. He believed that the physical and mental abilities of man are limited but he has almost an infinite capacity for spiritual growth. Aurobindo sought to augment the spiritual growth of man by his integral yoga for enabling man to outgrow his limited human nature and at the same time also to spiritualise the human institutions.

To show the "inevitability" of the birth of the supramental community Aurobindo has traced the socio-political evolution of man from the beginning. Roy, in contrast, has no faith in the pre-determinism of human history. He has also traced the development of human institutions but only to show that it is man who has created all his institutions in the past and in future also he will be able to create and re-create institutions to suit his purpose. Unlike Aurobindo, Roy has never ceased to emphasise the importance of appropriate institutions. Since an individual man is not a self-sufficient being, he always needs the company and cooperation of others. According to Roy, the rational faculty of man is in operation in this process of socio-

political evolution from the outset. Aurobindo's aim to trace the course of social evolution was, however, different. He wanted to demonstrate that the birth of the supramental community is "decreed and inevitable". Accordingly, he has broadly divided the entire course of man's socio-political evolution into three stages - pre-rational, rational and supra-rational. He argued that just as the pre-rational stage of man has been succeeded by the rational stage, so the rational stage in turn will be superseded by the supra-rational stage. At the pre-rational stage human instincts were in operation and at the rational stage now the human mind is in operation. The supra-rational stage will therefore see the creation of the Supermind. As we have noticed, he, following Lamprecht, has also projected an idealistic interpretation of social evolution pointing to the sure advent of the supramental age.

Now, there is a good deal of controversy even now among the anthropologists about the origin of society. Political philosophers are not naturally very much interested in digging out the truth in this respect. They therefore proceed to weave their own respective theory of the origin of society and state in consonance with their respective philosophical predilections. The social contrast theories are the most glaring examples of this tendency. What Aurobindo and Roy have done is thus not something quite unnatural. Gandhi was not a theoretician and so he has not involved himself in the controversy over the origin of society.

The theory of the origin of society respectively upheld by Roy and Aurobindo has, however, been put forward not only in support of rationalism and super-rationalism. It is also stretched to cover the relation between the individual and the society. Roy argued that institutions are made by human individuals to help them in their struggle for existence and freedom, and therefore all our old and new institutions must be made to serve the individual ends. It is true that mere institutional devices cannot carry us very far because institutions are run by men, and so if men are bad, even good institutions will be run unsatisfactorily. This, however, only goes to show the need of improving the moral quality of human beings, but Roy did not feel that this in

any way minimises the importance of social institutions. As against Roy, Aurobindo contended that an institution which is the product of rational and deliberate calculation would be merely a soulless mechanical aggregation bound by the ties of self-interest and requiring a coercive technique of social control. According to him, such a collectivity is bound to be oppressive in nature and incapable of delivering the goods. Then when a new institution is created in its place, it, with its tall claim, will become only "another prison" and will "compel a fresh struggle for liberation". Aurobindo has thus expressed an almost complete lack of trust in social engineering.

What Aurobindo wanted is that every institution would have to be more than a mere mechanical aggregate only concerned with the physical and intellectual necessity of man. It should be a spiritual formation having a soul of its own. Aurobindo believed that groups, like individuals, have souls of their own. Not calculating human individuals but a group-soul will bring into being an appropriate institution. It would then act as a spiritually conscious unit imbued with a sense of "deeper brotherhood" in which all dissatisfactions and discords would get merged. Aurobindo has called this society a natural or organic society opposed to the mechanised-cum-rational society.

Aurobindo now proceeded to make some comments on the socio-political evolution of man. In ancient times "when the individual idea was yet unborn", all societies were organic in nature. They were self-regulated by folkways and mores: and where regulations were required, the institutions of regulation were created by the group-soul. The customary institutions and the customary laws were not created by the rulers, the rulers being merely their managers and executors. In India the still lingering elements of the *jatidharma* and the *kuladharma* are the left-overs from her ancient organic or natural society.

The society, however, started taking an increasingly mechanised-cum-rational form with the growth of political institutions. The state is indeed the great instrument of transition from the infra-rational organic stage to that of the rational stage. With the growing complexity of the society the head of the family or the tribe was no longer able to enforce public order.

In the place of a diversity and plurality of centres of political authority a centralisation was needed, and the state was endowed with the acquisition of the monopoly of legal power of violence. The intelligent will of the entire society began finding expression in newer and newer rules and regulations supplementing or replacing the mass of customary laws. Such a concentration of authority for the first time took place with the growth of a viable monarchy.

But although the state had its beginning mainly as a machinery of coordination and maintaining order, in course of time it has developed into a social agency and has been undertaking to an increasing extent multifarious socio-economic functions. Aurobindo saw in the process an interesting and desirable development. He thus did not take a rather negative view of the state-functions that it should only provide the ordered framework in which individuals would carry on their activities. He took a positive view of the functions of the state and wanted that the state should function as the hindrance to the hindrances of good life in the sense that it is to create the conditions in which each individual can get equal chances of development "in the line of his nature".

But at the same time Aurobindo struck a warning. The state is not an organic institution. It is a power-machine *par excellence*. It has no soul nor does it represent the "best idealism" of a national community. Any ethical consideration does not normally enter into its calculation. The state is a soulless collectivity and stands on a quite different footing from the nation-community which, according to Aurobindo, has a 'soul' and an organic character of its own clamouring for self-fulfilment. To take such a view of the state leaves Aurobindo apart among all the idealist thinkers who glorify not only the community and the nation but also the state. Even such a sober English idealist as Green with whose views about the functions of the state those of Aurobindo had a striking similarity was no exception in this respect. The latter came nearer to Roy and perhaps also Gandhi to the extent to which he departed from other idealist thinkers.

Aurobindo has always placed a great emphasis upon human

freedom. It is true that this freedom has hardly any secular meaning. In his opinion, freedom can be enjoyed by man only in the context of his subjection to the spiritual laws which are the laws of God. "True freedom is only possible", said Aurobindo, "if we live in the infinite, live, as the Vedanta bids us, in and from our self-existent being". He wanted "the kingdom of God within and in the race" to be the basis "on which man must come in the end to the possession of himself". In this context the individual, even though organically related to society, is not merely a cell in the social whole. He is also an independent being in himself. So Aurobindo refused to pin his faith in any collectivist ideology seeking to merge his personality in the body politic or to suppress his freedom by excessive control and state regimentation.

Thus although Aurobindo warned us against the possibility of democracy degenerating into oligarchy and plutocracy, he is *more concerned* with the rise of modern totalitarian dictatorships like Fascism and Communism. Their rise shows that evil triumphs over good and God cannot therefore be an active agent in the affairs of the world. It has been previously seen how Aurobindo has sought to explain the origin and existence of evil in a world created by God, and we need not enter again into that controversy here. But in connection with the rise of totalitarian regimes he argued that moral or ethical power was not adequate enough to resist the swelling power of the evil. Only the mystics having the direct contact with the Spirit and the training in the life of the Spirit can derive from it sufficient strength to salvage the foundering humanity. Here we may incidentally remark that Aurobindo did not regard the subservience of man to God as the loss of freedom on his part. It is, on the contrary, a fulfilment of his urge for freedom.

Aurobindo argued that if the state is no better than a machine devoted to a relentless pursuit of power, the community or the nation is spiritual sub-totanty. Thus there may be a cultural, intellectual and social development of a nation without any active initiative on the part of the state; and though we may speak of a national culture, a national education and even a national religion, it would be absurd to have a state culture,

a state education and a state religion. In the same way Aurobindo glorified the community at the cost of the state and described it as the body of the Brahman. In the idealist thought of the West individuals derive their significance from their membership of the community which means that man has to live not only *in* community but also *as a part* of the community. This hardly leaves much scope for individual freedom while Aurobindo has never abstained from emphasising the spiritual importance of the individual. What distinguishes a soul from a piece of matter is that unlike matter it has an end or purpose and it wants to become. An individual man is not a self-sufficient man. He needs and wants the company and cooperation of others, which leads him to live in society and community. But a community often develops an ego and tries to suppress the legitimate aspirations of its individual members. In that case, the purpose of the soul remains unfulfilled.

Since both the individual and the community are the manifestations of the divinity, Aurobindo concluded by way of deductive reasoning that there cannot be any fundamental antagonism between their purposes and practices and they should not work at cross purposes. For any clash between the two the individual-egoism may also be as responsible as the group-egoism. Both are one-sided. A balance has to be struck not so much by a mechanical arrangement as by a harmonious synthesis. Thus, according to Aurobindo, the ideal law of social development is the law of perfect individuality and perfect reciprocity, and the divine perfection of a society is possible only through the spiritual transformation of its separate individual units.

The state-idea which has gripped our mind to-day has, however, given rise to a serious problem not merely by regimenting the individualities of its citizens. Externally also it has been seriously disturbing the global peace. Aurobindo therefore posed the pertinent question. If the individual man can infuse the communal groups surrounding him with his vision and spiritual strength, can we not extend it still further to the human race itself? In his political days Aurobindo professed and preached the religion of nationalism but subsequently nationa-

tism appeared to him only as a stage on the onward march of man although national egoism itself dies hard.¹ He pleaded now that our mental circumference must be widened from nationalism to globalism. Aurobindo, however, did not find much hope in the creation of an institution like the League of Nations' Organisation. It is international in form and not in spirit. If it is to save humanity, it has to be re-cast "in another mould animated by another spirit". It means that the spirit of world-community must inform any world-union or world-state to be created. A religion of humanity is needed urgently for the purpose. But this religion must not consist of only a set of ethical rules binding a compulsory or voluntary association of national states. It has to be spiritual in character. "A spiritual religion of humanity is the hope of the future", said Aurobindo. What it signifies is "the growing realisation that there is a secret Spirit, a divine Reality, in which we are all one, that humanity is the highest present vehicle on earth, that the human race and the human being are the means by which it will progressively reveal itself here". Aurobindo contended that a "spiritual oneness" will create the "psychological oneness not dependent upon any intellectual or outward uniformity". The "psychological oneness" will in its turn create "a oneness of life not bound up with its mechanical means of unification, but ready always to enrich its secure unity by a free inner variation". This spiritual religion of humanity will form "the basis for a higher type of human existence". It must be distinguished from Roy's philosophy of New Humanism which is secular, rational and ethical in character.

While going to spiritualise the human society Aurobindo has also given stress upon the spiritualisation of social sciences which give us knowledge about the human society. His position was not that there can be no social science in the proper sense of the term because every social event is unique in itself and cannot be repeated and also because different persons are likely to behave differently even under almost identical situations. He believed that society is law-governed but the laws of society, even more than those of the physical universe, are spiritual laws, the society being decisively a spiritual organisation embodying

the working of the group-soul.² According to him, the existing social sciences suffer from empiricism and concentrate only on superficial external data dealing with laws, rites, customs, economic factors, etc. A careful collection and collation of external facts of the social life can merely lead to certain conclusions in the shape of "secondary rules" and "practical by-laws" which help us to tide over the difficulties of the moment". But to get an insight into the true nature of the social process we shall have to shift our emphasis *from* the external data of surface movement *to* the inner data of the deeper spiritual life lived by us. Reason cannot give us this insight. It investigates what surface movements occur and how but *not* why they occur. So what is needed is teleological sociology.

Aurobindo therefore came to the conclusion that social sciences as we find them to-day are all worthless and they shall have to be re-written in the light of divine knowledge and realisation. And this task of re-writing should devolve upon yogis and mahayogis who alone can have the necessary internal data.

Like Aurobindo, Roy too made frequent references to social sciences but his social sciences are the existing "worthless" factual social sciences. The more Aurobindo differs from Roy, the closer he came to Pitirim A. Sorokin, an eminent American sociologist born in 1889, who spoke of replacing the existing "factual" sociology by one based on intuition and wanted it to be written by Hindu yogis and Christian mystics.³

At the same time Aurobindo stood for spiritualising education. The coming of a spiritual age to which he wistfully looked forward must be preceded by the appearance of an increasing number of individuals who will perceive the importance of unveiling the true self within. An "integral" knowledge is intended for the purpose. But an "integral" knowledge is not an intellectual knowledge which can be learned; it is a knowledge which must be experienced and realised. This is knowledge to be attained by yoga, a "higher" knowledge than the "lower" knowledge of "science, art, philosophy, ethics, psychology". The educational system devised by Aurobindo is to create individuals ready to receive this

"higher" knowledge. In his educational theory provision has been made for education upon the physical, vital, psychic and mental stages: and he is convinced that an integral development of the physical being, vital being, psychic being and mental being brings about finally the transformation of man into a spiritual being. In fact, the principles of Aurobindo's "integral" educational theory are similar to those of his "integral" yoga.

The foregoing review of the fundamental social thought of Aurobindo will demonstrate that he was not at all concerned with ensuring the control of the people over their institutions. So he condemns not only totalitarian democracy but also democracy of a purer type. He was interested not in democratising, but in spiritualising, the human institutions. For this purpose what he wanted is not the rule of number but the rule of some spiritually free individuals—individuals who have the spiritual realisation of the Vedantic idea of the common divinity of all men.

For this spiritual realisation Aurobindo has attached supreme importance to *brahmacharya* which has been lauded in the Indian literature as a vital aid to success in the spiritual field. But to Aurobindo it was not merely a process of spiritual development. It is the force behind civilisation itself. Essentially *brahmacharya* is a technique of the moral conservation of energy which is allegedly the manifestation of the Divine and constituted the foundation on which Indian civilisation and culture were once built. The observance of the *brahmacharya* will now enable men to find the divine self in the individual and the collectivity and "to realise spiritually, mentally, vitally, materially the greatest, largest, richest and deepest possibilities in the inner life of all and their outer action and nature".⁴ As has been pointed out by Aristotle long ago, virtue is not a problem of sheer knowledge but of character also. This had its tacit recognition from the ancient Hindus who tried to achieve social order and social improvement by ethical, rather than legal, means. By training they sought to create individuals, with a high sense of moral obligation, and these individuals were trusted to rule their fellows on the basis of enlightened discretion and with a minimum of reference to fixed legal rules.

This ancient Hindu concept has been reflected in Aurobindo's character of the rule of spiritually enlightened people with their character steered by *brahmacharya*.

Basically this rule of spiritually enlightened people carries with it the idea of trusteeship which has been popularised so much by Gandhi in our country. But with Gandhi it is only a moral ideal confined mainly to the economic field, Aurobindo, however, regards it a spiritual ideal to be applied to be observed, equally to the economic and political fields. Although both Gandhi and Aurobindo have derived their sustenance of the ideal of human unity from the Upanisads, the latter pleaded for a deeper realisation of the ideal than Gandhi. He was keenly interested to see that the trusteeship idea does not remain merely on the level of a high-sounding doctrine.

Although Aurobindo is not favourably disposed towards a "vitalistic" clinging to possessions, he did not either approve of poverty and self-abnegation. He advocated the middle path. This is a fundamental difference between the social thought of Gandhi and that of Aurobindo. Indeed, according to the latter, poverty is not at all a Hindu ideal. It is a Christian ideal. But, like Gandhi, he would not like to deprive the rich of their excess wealth. He wanted that they should lead a moderately comfortable life avoiding two extremes and hold in trust the excess thus left. Even if wealth serves the purpose of the outer life, "in its origin and true action it belongs to the Divine". It is therefore to be "regarded as consecrated as serving a divine purpose". The owners of property are required to hold it in trust on behalf of God and use it for the general good of His creatures. The concept of "mental non-ownership and detachment" should be the "new ethics" of a spiritualised society.

Aurobindo further regarded political power too as a trust. We have noticed before that he has repudiated the very concept of a simple, numerical majority. True to his philosophical stand, he speaks of an "inner theocracy" in which spiritually free individuals, like Plato's philosophers, will hold the political power and remain responsible for its exercise to their own conscience without being subject to any pressure

from outside. Through them "a divine guidance" will be available to the race. The politics of the spiritualised society is to aim at the replacement of *realpolitick* by the politics of morality and ultimately of spirituality. A spiritualised society would then regard the institutions "as group-souls, the Divinity concealed and to be self-discovered in its human collectivities". This spiritual principle has to be increasingly reflected in political patterns and diplomatic textures, social structure and social relations. And when it is done, the present existing society will be transformed into a spiritual community.

Thus we see that the social thought of Aurobindo is predominantly paternalistic and elitist. Never has he shown any "weakness" for democracy. It is true that he has expressed his unmitigated disgust of all sorts of totalitarian ideology. But he has done it more from the viewpoint of liberalism than of democracy. The two must not be confused together. Logically as well as historically democracy and liberalism are two separate ideals.

The term 'liberalism' is rooted in the Latin 'liberalis' which means 'pertaining to a free man'. It came into common use from the 'Liberales', a political party of Spain during the early 19th century. The word 'liberal' as a party label became popular in Britain as a result of sympathy for the Spanish liberals. Liberalism then has come to mean a mental attitude which looks upon liberty as the supreme value in life. And so far as it has any social implications, it wants to organise social living on that value. On the other hand, democracy, as its Greek roots (*demos* and *kretos*) signify, is primarily a rule by the people. The term was first used by Thucydides in his *History of the Peloponnesian War* while going to describe the famous funeral speech of Pericles.

Seen in the historical perspective too, the two concepts had no connection. We find democracy at work in ancient Athens but the concept of individual liberty was then conspicuous by its absence there. There was an element of accident involved in the original association of liberalism with democracy. When in England the rising bourgeoisie began simultaneously fighting for the extension of the franchise and

the removal of various existing feudal restrictions, liberalism came to be associated with the democratic process.

Liberal thinkers, however, have generally looked upon democracy with distrust. They have sounded a note of warning that democracy is likely to be a rule of mediocre men, and when such a majority has tasted power, it would be intolerant of the unconventional opinions of the intelligent minority to which humanity owes all its progress. Aurobindo has simply fallen in their line.

Intolerance is, however, not a peculiar characteristic of democracy as such. Power itself is arrogant and expansive in nature. So every form of government—be it of the one, the few or the many—has an inherent tendency to be intolerant. If Socrates, Christ, Savonarola and Galileo were repudiated by the mobs of ordinary people, these were all mere appearances. In fact, they were the victims of the machinations of monarchic and aristocratic groups. An ill-conceived liberalism must not be allowed to frustrate the valid claims of democracy.

Before we conclude, we should, however, notice that even though Aurobindo had absolutely no faith in social engineering as such, he did not completely rule out institutional readjustments "so far as these can help". Thus he showed his preference for small units, both political and economic, because in vast collectivities "all energies" would be directed towards "external work", to the detriment of the proper functioning of the "inner" world of man⁶. As we shall observe subsequently, Gandhi and Roy also stood for small units. But they did it because the people would find it easier to establish their control over these units. This part of the question, however, did not interest Aurobindo. He preferred small units for spiritual reasons.

Thus we see that the spiritualised society constitutes the millennium of Aurobindo's social thought. It is not meant to be a mere conceptual reality which would be inwardly approached by isolated individuals. It is destined to be a concrete social, political and economic era. A mental fiction of Aurobindo has thus become for all practical purposes an obsession with him. He has made the solution of all practical

problems of the country and the world conditional upon the descent of the Supermind upon the earth. This has reminded Roy of Lord Northcliffe who developed an obsession with child-birth before his death. He could not help mentioning it in every article he wrote whether on Dutch imperialism, repatriation problem or Japanese menace.⁷ Now what child-birth was to the noble Lord supramentalism was to Aurobindo. Both were psychopathological cases.

NOTES

1. Aurobindo was a great supporter of national self-determination but he was dead opposed to national egoism giving birth to nationalist jingoism.
2. According to Aurobindo, all branches of art and science are "means by which we arrive at the knowledge of the workings of God through Nature and through life"
3. Sarokin's *Social and Cultural Dynamics*, Vol. 2, p. vii and *The Reconstruction of Humanity*, p. 24
4. *The Brain of India*, pp. 11-19.
5. *The Mother*, pp. 19-23.
6. *Human Cycle*, p. 318.

"Machine can help to make life more comfortable it can add to the convenience, etc. but how can it help men in spiritual and inner progress". - *Evening Talks*, Third Series, p. 320.

Aurobindo, however, wanted the units to be visible. *Ibid* Second Series, Talk on 16. 1. 1924.

7. *Vanguard*, Vol. 4, No. 1 dated 15. 12. 1923.
8. During the transitional period Aurobindo recognised the importance of morality also. So long as one cannot come in contact with the dynamic Divine source of action in himself one has to be guided by some law of conduct otherwise one might take up the attitude: "There is no virtue and no sin so let us sin merrily". It is to be noted further that *sarva dharmam parityajya* (abandoning all laws of conduct) is said by Krishna at the end of the Gita and not at the beginning. - *Evening Talks*, Third Series pp. 149-150

b) SOCIAL THOUGHT OF GANDHI

Aurobindo, as we have already observed, pooch-pooched modern social sciences and wanted that social sciences, if they

are to be worth anything, should be written by yogis and sages. Gandhi too came periliously to the same position when he asserted that the scriptures of the world are "far safer and sounder treatises" on social affairs "than many of the modern text books", and, if necessary, the existing scriptures may also be re-written and re-interpreted.¹ Gandhi, however, differed from Aurobindo on the point that while the latter wanted to "spiritualise" social sciences, the former sought only to "moralise" them. For Gandhi ethics and social sciences were the two aspects of a single enquiry — how to live a truthful and non-violent life.

ECONOMIC THOUGHT

Now, according to Gandhi, how a truthful and non-violent life can be lived has been shown in the *Bhagwadgita*. The *Gita* preaches the twin values of *swaraj* and *swadharma*, the realisation of which has been taken to presuppose a life of renunciation. Translated in economic terms, it may be called economics of non-violence because the pursuit of material goods is the root-cause of war and other disturbances. Gandhi saw a life of greed and exploitation as incompatible with the pursuit of truth also. The term 'truth' should be understood here in the ethical sense.

Gandhi's *Hind Swaraj* is the secular counter-part of the *Bhagwadgita* as interpreted by him. He has looked to the *Gita* as his virtual guide to action, and he has endeavoured to bring out the social implications of its teaching in his own light. This has given birth to a Gandhian *Gita* — the *Gita* according to Gandhi. The Hindus might not immediately accept this new edition of their scripture but Gandhi was confident that it "will have its effect on all in the long run".

Much of the social thought of the Mahatma enshrined in the *Hind Swaraj* has been reflected in the Gandhian *Gita*. The *Hind Swaraj* is indeed a fundamental document in respect of the *ultimate* ideal of the Mahatma. Obviously it was the product of a deeper sense of inspiration to which all great religious leaders are known to be prone. Of course, in this formulation

of his ultimate ideal he was also influenced by some Western thinkers like Tolstoy, Thoreau, Ruskin and Carpenter. But we should not omit to see that these thinkers were in their turn profoundly influenced by the Indian religious texts — particularly the *Upanisads* and the *Gita* and are often considered cranks in their own countries.

In Gandhi we find no secular concept of freedom. What he wanted was not so much freedom as *swaraj* and not so much self-development as self-realisation. The term '*swaraj*' originally occurs in the Vedanta to signify the highest spiritual state when the individual has realised his identity with Universal and is free from the "Bondage". It means not the absence of restriction but self-restraint and self-control.

This concept of self-control has led him to oppose the control over physical nature and advocate control over human nature. The control over physical nature has created unlimited possibilities of human indulgence and has given birth to modern civilisation while control over human nature means the limitation of human wants.² In modern economies everything has value if it is wanted and does not concern itself whether it is good or bad. From the ethical viewpoint, however, Gandhi was opposed to the "unnecessary" multiplication and diversification of human wants. We shall be able to grasp the nature of the Gandhian economic thought only if we remember that Gandhi was not at all preparing the economic blue-print of a modern state. What he set out to do was to indicate the economic content of a Kingdom of God — the Vedantic *swaraj* where a far greater importance is to be attached to the "spiritual" needs of man than to his physical needs.

Gandhi was opposed to modern technology since modern civilisation is its creation. Technology in the restricted sense is merely the apparatus of converting raw materials into finished products. But in a comprehensive sense technology means the whole matrix of modern civilisation. Daniel Bell has tried to bring about the comprehensive character of technology when he asserted that the organisation of a hospital or an international trade system is a *social* technology as the automobile or a mechanically controlled tool is a *machine* technology and an

intellectual technology is the substitution of algorithms (problem-solving rules) for intuitive judgments. Gandhi has voiced his opposition to this multi-dimensional technology. As a matter of fact, his opposition to machine technology was only a part of his total opposition to modern civilisation.

Further, Gandhi, a votary of the supernatural, had also a firm faith in the natural. It has been seen earlier that Gandhi swore allegiance to the Vedic concept of *rita*. The *rita* is not only a moral, but also a natural, order. It means that what is natural is also moral. Gandhi considered it a sin to interfere with the natural regime. He therefore asserted that machine is "a great sin" and it would be "better" for us to send money to Manchester than to multiply mills in India because by using Manchester cloth we would only "waste" our money but "by reproducing Manchester in India we shall keep our money at the price of our blood". Machine was also considered unnatural as it would not require "the use of their hands and feet". Gandhi was sure that machinery would "sap" the "very moral being of India".

Gandhi has, however, refused to call himself a technophobe. Is not charka a wooden machine? he asked. To get a clear answer to this question we must look at the history of technological development. As we have already seen, technology started its career as an art but it has culminated in technology as a science. Science and technology (applied science) are today the right and left feet of the advancing man. Gandhi was opposed not so much to technology as an art as to technology as a science.

Some sociologists have, however, formulated some sort of Gresham's law of technology in the sense that higher levels of technology drive out the lower. But the Mahatma did not think that technology is an "unstoppable juggernaut". In all laws dealing with man there is always the possibility of repeal, and the case of technological development is no exception. Gandhi argued that an interest in "lower" technology does not amount to anti-technologism. It only shows *how far* technology can be used in a friendly way. Thus in his indictment of machinery he has made a notable exception in favour of the

sewing machine but he has done it because it is either hand-driven and foot-driven and partakes of the character of biotechnic. He did not mind if the machinery itself is manufactured in power-driven big factories.

Gandhi stood for the "natural" also in food, drink and medicine and accordingly advocated vegetarianism, prohibition and naturopathy. He further pointed out that the health of the people suffer where the "means of artificial locomotion" increase. Gandhi's denunciation of city life was similarly motivated. To Gandhi, as to many other religious-minded people, the order is the nearest we can come to God's law on earth.

Gandhi was confident that "our forefathers" knew how to invent machinery but "after due deliberation" they decided that "we should only do what we could do with our hands and feet". It is true that there was enough engineering skill in Hindu India but this skill had never been connected with the process of economic production not because "our forefathers" were very spiritually minded but because there was plenty of cheap sudra labour in the country and we had no need for any labour-saving device.

Modern economics has an obsession with marginal changes within a given economic system rather than with qualitative changes in the economic system itself. Gandhi's craze for the "natural", however, led him to seek a total abrogation of the existing industrial civilisation and stage a return to the old village life based on craft-economy and small-scale farming.³ He seems to have been much enamoured of the vision of what Schumacher has called "Small is beautiful".

Gandhi did not bother himself with the idea that the return to the old economy would curtail the standard of living. For what interested him was not the standard of living but the standard of life — the quality of life and not the quantity of goods. In this connection Gandhi conceived a doctrine of the soil. The soil sets limits and requires a villager to contain himself within its capacity. As Gandhi said, "earth provides enough to satisfy every man's need, but not every man's greed". Mechanised industry, on the other hand, knows no such

limitation. Its law is one of progressive increase.

We should also note here Gandhi's advocacy of bread labour which enjoins that everyone ought to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow in some occupation connected with agriculture or any of its allied industries. It would not do if we earn our bread by intellectual labour because "the needs of the body must be supplied by the body". Gandhi has found the sanction for bread labour from the *Gita*⁴ although it goes counter to the *Varnasramadharma* to which also he lent support in the same text.

Gandhi has also his socio-economic grounds in justification of his economic stand. The return to cottage production would thus solve the problem of chronic rural unemployment and the production by masses in lieu of production by the few would go a long way towards the establishment of a decentralised and egalitarian society. The moral superiority of self-employment to wage-employment in a factory privately or publicly owned may also be emphasised. But Gandhi would not liquidate the existing mills or their owners. He only wanted that the owners should be persuaded to act on the trusteeship principle which would convert acquisitive capitalism into people's capitalism.

Above all, Gandhi favoured hand-economy in view of the fact that it would place man once again at the centre of his economic world and restore his supremacy over it. It would in this way help the solution of the crisis of contemporary civilisation.

It is undeniable that Gandhi has displayed a wonderful insight into our economic life when he contended that in economics also the supreme consideration is man. The sheer acquisition of material wealth is certainly ruled out by the true nature of economic activities. Etymologically 'wealth' is allied to 'weal' just as 'health' is allied to 'heal'. So the well-ness or well-being of man is the proper aim of our economic pursuits in which human and moral considerations must gain the primacy over the mere economic considerations.

In spite of this sound approach the economic thought of the Mahatma has been vitiated by the fact that he took an essen-

tially Vedantic view of man. This view led him to take a morbid attitude towards life and discountenance human desires as such. Gandhi's theory of consumption was determined accordingly, and his theory of production followed logically from his theory of consumption. God thus over-ruled the humanistic inspiration of his economic thought.

It is therefore not for nothing that Gandhi came to attach greater importance to employment than to poverty. It was mainly with an eye to full employment that he wanted the revival of the decadent cottage industries as the ruling sector of the economy even if their productivity is extremely low. That is why Gandhi did not like a simple eight-spindle spinning wheel invented by Maurice Frydman, a Poland born engineer living in his asrama. Gandhi thought it to be "too complicated". But when the engineer pointed out that a simpler spinning wheel would not give the product, Gandhi promptly replied: "I don't care for the product. I want everyone to be employed".⁶

But what Gandhi has called employment is only an illusion of employment, it being gross unemployment. In fact, such employment amounts to a sheer drudgery at miserable pittance. In the last resort the employment potentialities of cottage production are not great since it is not likely to create much secondary employment and so on. Further the cottage production has to be protected in a hot-house against the competition of existing mills, even if there is no proliferation of them. After all, the Gandhian economy will be a high-cost economy where there is little scope for what is known in economics as consumers' surplus. A labour-intensive technology does not also require less capital per unit of output, and from that viewpoint the old craft cannot be said to be less capital-intensive than modern technology. To remove the poverty of the country we must augment the productivity of Indian labour by mechanising the process of production, and we can achieve productivity as well as employment and also even self-employment through the introduction of an intermediate technology. But Gandhi would not favour it because of his Vedantic attitude towards life. Here he may mention that nothing improves so much the moral level of a community as the increase of its material wealth.

Like Gandhi, Jefferson too at one stage voiced his opposition to machine production and city-life. He then thought that America must have no room for city-life, and she should send her raw materials to Europe to bring them back in finished products. But experience made Jefferson wiser, and he modified his position in later life. No such development is, however, to be found in Gandhi. In fact, Gandhi never grew. He started with that "little book" *Hind Swaraj* and ended with it. Gandhi could not grow because his values were all Divine values, i. e., derived from the attributes of God which are eternal and immutable. The Vedanta made Gandhi stagnant.

Gandhi's theory of trusteeship was to tackle in a non-violent way the existing problem of maldistribution of wealth. He thus pinned his faith more in a welfare capitalism than in a welfare state. He recognised the individual's right to property but insisted on the moral use of it. In fact, Gandhi's doctrine of self-regulation as applied to business has given rise to the concept of trusteeship. Pyarelal testifies that Gandhi has derived this concept from the principle of non-possession enunciated in the opening verse of the *Isopanisad*. He took this verse to be central to the teaching of the entire Upanisadic literature.

Exchange is, of course, the standard economic method of the allocation of resources in a society. But at least to some extent philanthropy may result in unilateral transactions involving no payment whatsoever. Trusteeship may therefore be accepted as a method of re-distributing concentrated wealth in favour of the poor. The social quality is an attribute of humanity, the manifestation of which goes back to the rudest societies. In some of the communities like those of the Eskimos, Aleuts and Fuegians the principal use of the accumulation of personal wealth is for *periodically* distributing it. Similar accounts of the extreme altruistic sentiment of many African and Siberian aborigines have been given by sociologists.

But in course of time religion has vitiated the spontaneous community sentiment of man. It has taught him now to regard charity solely as a passport to personal salvation. Man as man no longer interests us, and the trusteeship theory to-day is no better than a eulogistic way of justifying one's possess-

ion and control of property at the hands of our vested interests. Gandhi has indeed always found plausible grounds to support vested interests. He supported the *Varnasramadharm* because, according to him, it afforded to the Brahmins greater opportunity to render superior service to society than to enjoy superior status in society. In the same way he defended the present-day accumulation of capital in the hands of capitalists as it would enable them to serve society by producing more wealth and by acting as accredited trustees of the poor. Now it is amusing to find the Mahatma, a votary of Indian poverty, as lending support to the propertied classes for their capacity to produce more wealth. It is also no less deceptive to expect them to hold their wealth in trust for their unfortunate fellow-men.

We have no reasons to think that the Indian capitalists or even the Gandhian capitalists are more "spiritual" than their counter-parts in other countries. Pyarelal has described an anecdote how Birla who never missed an opportunity to declare himself as a Gandhi-man sabotaged a practical trusteeship formula prepared by Prof. Dantwala of Bombay and approved by Gandhi himself in 1942.⁶ In independent India Birla then ended by posing as a trustee of the shareholders of his numerous companies.⁷ Jamnalal Bajaz, another prominent Gandhian capitalist, often declared himself to be model trustee for his labourers but he too left enough property to his sons to live like multi-millionaires. The profession of high but impracticable principles by Gandhi, even if sincerely done, has only given rise to hypocrisy, double talk and double dealing among his camp-followers.

Gandhi, of course, recommended once non-cooperation by the workers to force the reluctant capitalists to change their heart. But, curiously enough, after the attainment of independence by India he questioned the desirability of striking work or resorting to any other sort of non-cooperation with the mill-authorities because it would hamper the national production. It is really distressing to find a Mahatma cherishing conveniently his line of thinking according to the dictates of the needs of his financiers.

The principal charge against the trusteeship idea is not, however, that it encourages a fraudulent practice but that it is derogatory to human dignity, it being feudalistic, paternalistic and anti-democratic in character. It does not cease to be so even if it is acted upon. In pre-modern days when there was no abundance, moralists exhorted the rich to share their property with the poor. But today when there is the potentiality of abundance all round, the question of charity should not arise unless it is a matter of gross mal-distribution. The teeming millions of India cannot wait eternally for the change of hearts of a few capitalists while they go on expanding their respective industrial empire.

POLITICAL THOUGHT

The political thought of the Mahatma, like its economic counter-part, was highly coloured by his Vedantic view of life. That is why we do not find there any elaborate theory of state and democracy. What we find instead is the political aspect of the Vedantic concept of *swaraj* known as Ramarajya.

Self-rule is the distinguishing feature of the Ramarajya. If the national life becomes so perfect as to be self-regulated, no coercive institution is called for. Everyone becomes his own ruler, and he rules himself in such a manner that he is never a hindrance to his neighbours. He would now perfectly realise that the good of the individual consists in the good of all. In that case, self-regulation takes the place of state-regulation. This is a state of enlightened anarchy which Gandhi has called *satyodaya*. Under *satyodaya* the last stage of communism would be the first stage. The Mahatma may therefore be hailed as the first Indian anarchist because no Indian intellectual prior to him is known to have taken an avowed anarchist position, and the Mahatma has perhaps the unique distinction of being the lone anarchist of the world, as we shall presently see.

Gandhi's opposition to the state thus sprang not only from his concept of self rule but also from his concept of non-violence. Since the state has the legal monopoly of the coercive power of a community, it is an embodiment of violence in the

eyes of Gandhi. So it fitted ill with his non-violent way of life, and a non-violent state, like a communist state, is a contradiction in terms. But Gandhi was realist enough to see that the total abolition of the state is not immediately feasible because of the imperfections of man. It would be rendered redundant only to the extent to which citizens become self-regulating and non-violent. Under the prevailing situation, however, Gandhi conceded the need of legal machinery powerful enough to provide an ordered framework in which different individuals and different associations would be in a position to carry on unhindered their manifold activities. At present it is all the more necessary because there is an anti-social minority whose depredations have to be curtailed in the larger interest of society. According to Swaminathan, editor of *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, "Gandhi felt that ninety per cent of our people didn't need to be governed. The only people who needed to be governed were the top five per cent, made up of the avaricious, the hoarders and the blackmarketeers and the bottom five per cent, made up of the common thieves, the murderers and the gangsters. The rest were fit to manage their own affairs in the villages, because they were godly men and women, the custodians of ancient wisdom, of India's morality and religion". Even if somewhat grudgingly, Gandhi thus accepted the state as a necessary evil--a concession to the hard realities. On occasions like the Boer War, the Zulu rebellion and the First World War this concession on his part went to such an extent that his duty as a law-abiding citizen got the better of his adherence to the values of truth and non-violence even though there were no *prima facie* urgencies for it. The position of Gandhi in this respect may be contrasted with that of Thoreau. The latter conscientiously refused to pay his local taxes and courted imprisonment for registering his protests against some aggressive acts of the USA Government leading to Mexican War of 1848. He averred that where moral questions are involved, no citizen should be asked to "resign his conscience to the legislator". The citizen is a man first and a citizen afterwards; and it is as a man that he must judge questions of right and wrong. Certainly Thoreau was more elevating than Gandhi here.

Gandhi, however, kept anarchism as his ultimate ideal for it indicates the direction in which we shall have to travel. Nobody has ever been able to draw a Euclid's line and never will. "All the same" argued Gandhi, "it is only by keeping the ideal line in mind that we have made progress in geometry. What is true here is true of every ideal".⁹ Like Roy, the Mahatma also believed in the perfectibility of man, if not in his perfection. So what the latter wanted to achieve at present is only a relatively non-violent state. He struck a *via media* between Bakunin and Marx.

When however, Gandhi conceded the existence of relatively non-violent states, he wanted them to be decentralised and democratic in character because such states alone are keeping in with his twin values of non-violence and truth. He was afraid that the concentration of power is most likely to result in violence. But we know that a decentralised state is not necessarily a democratic state. In the Middle Ages the politics of Europe was oligarchical in nature even though the structure of authority was loose-knit and there was a wide-spread dispersion of power.

Now, if Gandhi's principle of non-violence favours decentralisation, his principle of truth when applied to the mundane world gives rise to democracy. According to him, tolerance of others' opinions constitute the basis of democracy, and this tolerance comes from the realisation that "we see truth in fragment and from different angles of vision" so that "what may appear to be truth to one person may appear as untruth to another person". A subsidiary principle follows from it that at a particular time only a given truth to which the people have given their free consent should get predominance in governmental affairs. For a citizen, declared Gandhi, "there is no government that can control him without his sanction".

The breadth and depth of the Gandhian concept of democracy are not, however, great. Gandhi stood more for consent democracy than for participatory democracy. For him the democratic process must end with the voters exercising their franchise and indicating their choice. Any further participation on their part like recall, etc. was denounced by him as

"mobocracy" and "applause of the unthinking public". He further asserted that people's interest would be served more by expert knowledge than by "eloquence" and that perfect democracy is the most shameless thing of the world. Here we find the operation of the Gandhian theory of trusteeship in political affairs.¹⁰

Even his concept of consent democracy is also guarded by some 'ifs' and 'buts'. Thus he was opposed to universal adult franchise. He regarded franchise not as a right which would accrue to them as soon as they attain adulthood, i. e., 21 years of age although he would not object if the minimum age is lowered to 18. Gandhi regarded suffrage as a privilege to be earned by citizens. He accordingly wanted an adult *also* to be literate and perform manual labour before he is given the franchise.¹¹ Another novel idea about the Gandhian ideas of suffrage is that along with the minimum age he would also have a maximum age, say 50 years, beyond which a citizen should not be allowed to exercise the franchise. It means that he would allow the voting privilege only to the people belonging to the second stage of the *Varnasramadharma*, i. e., to the householders. This indirectly betrays his firm belief in the *varnasramadharma*. Gandhi would, of course, have a "rustic and humble" President as the ceremonial head of the state and would rejoice to have a methor (scavenger) girl as the first President.¹² Such proposals may have symbolic value but is certainly no compensation for the insufficient provision for democracy in the electoral process.

Now so far as the governmental structure is concerned, Gandhi would have only at the "foundational unit" a government directly elected by the people which he called village democracy, but for the edifice he recommended indirectly elected committees of the pyramidal type. The pyramidal structure is to consist of a hierarchy of committees above the village democracy, and at each stage the higher committees will be elected by the committees just below them. The idea of an indirectly elected organisational hierarchy was first mooted by Gandhi at the Round Table Conference and returned to his mind again and again till the last days of his life.¹³

Since in the pyramidal structure of state the higher committees will be indirectly elected by the committees just below them, the committees of each higher tier get removed further and further from the primary voters. It will make the evils of representation more and more pronounced making the assertion of the people at the higher state organs increasingly difficult. Here Gandhi appears to have followed the ancient Hindu approach which afforded ample scope for democracy at the village level but visualised no follow-up action as we ascend higher.

In response to a query by some Congressmen on the eve of the transfer of power in 1947 Gandhi, however, gave out his ideas of the shape of the free Indian state as rather circular in nature. He wrote in the *Harijan* that its structure would not be a pyramid with "the apex sustained by the bottom" but "an oceanic circle whose centre will be the individual ready to perish for the village, the latter ready to perish for the circle of villages, till at last the whole becomes one life". There will thus be "ever-widening, never ascending circles". Gandhi then concluded that in this structure "the outermost circumference will not wield power to crush the inner circle, but will give strength within and will derive its own strength from it". In such a state village, taluka, district and pradesh panchayats would "ultimately" federate "into an all-India Panchayat".¹⁴

The oceanic scheme of democracy appears to be commendable. It seeks to reconstruct Indian democracy from below and according to a federal principle. The state machinery is, after all, a set of committees at different levels. Under the scheme the ever-widening circle will be equal in status with an elaborate coordinate division of powers among them.

Thus the committees at each level will have a demarcated autonomous area of their own over which the committees at wider levels will have no control. Thus subjects having only local and limited importance will be allotted to village committees which are to be supreme within their jurisdiction. In the same way subjects having regional bearing shall be administered by taluka committees without any interference from the still wider circle committees and so and so forth. Thus the

national-level committee at the ultimate circumference would have jurisdiction over only a few appropriate subjects having national importance. It signifies that democracy would be virile at the grassroots level with the fewer and still fewer functions left for the committees at wider and still wider circles to administer.

What has been said so far relates exclusively to the state functions. But so far as the state organs for the ever widening circles are concerned, the oceanic variety of democracy hardly differs much from the pyramidal type. The basic problem of modern democracy is how to feed the higher ascending or spread-out committees from the base. We shall see later on it is exactly what Roy has sought to do in his scheme of democracy. But the problem has never bothered Gandhi. He has provided for more and more indirectly elected committees at different circumferences. This arrangement has been rendered all the more ominous by the terminology used by Gandhi in connection with its description. In the oceanic type of democracy individuals are expected to 'perish' for their respective villages, villages for talukas and so on. Here also Gandhi was thinking in terms of not the fulfilment of individual wishes and interests but of their sacrifice. The spirit animating the Gandhian state of oceanic type, no less than the hierarchical one, smacks of Fascism though perhaps of a non-violent character.

It would be wrong to assume that in independent India the Mahatma himself abjured power. It is true that he did not want to be a king but he well turned to be a king-maker. In dependent India Gandhi was not even a four anna member of the Congress but still he was the supreme authority in it. That is why Nehru characterised him as a 'Super-President'. It amounted to assuming power without responsibility. We should not forget that Gandhi nominated Nehru as his political successor for the leadership of free India. A successor might be nominated for a throne but it hardly suited a democratic form of government. In free India too he sometimes interfered with the running of the government. He first took a decision and the people were then psychologically coerced to accept it. Thus we see that in addition to the authoritative character of

the constitutional authority envisaged by him, Gandhi himself always exercised an extra-constitutional authority.

Implications for man : We have already seen the human implications of some of the economic and political proposals of Gandhi. Here we shall, however, confine ourselves to the over-all implications of the Gandhian society for man.

Roy, as we shall see, stood for a human existence for man and Aurobindo dreamt of a super-human existence for him but Gandhi condemned man to a sub-human existence. The prospect for human life in a Gandhian society is indeed bleak. In such a society the average Indian must always live on the margin of subsistence.

A child will have to work there from an early age ; and even if he goes to a Basic School, he will not fare much better for there also he will be made to work hard for financing his educational and other incidental expenses. But many of the children are likely to die at an early age from hardship and lack of medical care. Even those who will survive, they will hardly have much choice as to the means of their livelihood, and in times of famine they will again face death from hunger and starvation. The "moral law of bread labour" will give a man little leisure in life ; and even when he had it, he would have nothing pleasant to do with it. Even if the Gandhian society gives the individual a relatively secure status, he will have it in the midst of terrible insecurities- physical wants, hardship and fears born of the ignorance of the laws of nature. In this society man, quite contrary to the expectation of Gandhi, will become the slave of his environment.

In his *Ramarajya* Gandhi would have no railway. People would not need it for trading purposes because the villages there are to be more or less self-sufficient and they would not also need it for travelling purposes because long travelling is discouraged for its proneness to give rise to heretical ideas. Gandhi would perhaps further oppose the railway because it is likely to be "the forerunner of modern industry". The national life will thus be stagnant.

And this stagnation is to be further intensified by the victory of the Gandhian village kingdoms over the cities. Gandhi

appears to have borrowed the idea of village-kingdom from the practice of ancient India. The *gotras* or clan unions of the ancient Aryans which were based upon a real or supposed common descent from this or that sage kept them together for thousands of years in succession. But frequent migration and mingling with strangers led to the dissolution of those unions based upon kinship. Some new form of organisation founded upon some new principle was now required. The conception of common territory appropriated and protected by common efforts was accordingly developed to replace the vanishing concept of common descent. This saw the birth of the village-community, the outstanding features of which were, economically, common agriculture and, politically, complete self-jurisdiction. Then the system of self-sufficient villages in all the vital necessities of life was created at the instance of Kautilya, and they have since remained almost unchanged for about two thousand years.

But cities are the centres of all innovations and all thought-leaders come from there. Now the genesis of the idea of the victory of village-kingdoms over cities may be traced to the *Manusmṛiti* and other *Smṛiti* works where no mention is made of the cities but there is a description of the detailed regulation of the villages. The victory of village-kingdoms had fatal consequences for the country's future. The hide-bound caste system became more and more rigid within the confines of stagnant villages, the chief intellectual product of which was the Brahmin. For him travelling beyond the *Āryadesa* entailed penance. He was not even permitted to go into a town. For centuries he remained engaged in theological controversies and in questions like finding "auspicious" days for human purposes. Such a way of life killed history. A more or less similar fate awaits the Gandhian village-kingdoms.

The Gandhian democracy would not again give the general body of citizens full control over the higher organs of government, and despite his unending professed enthusiasm for village democracy he never activated the primary Congress Committees, and resisted all attempts of Roy to activate them. In socio-economic, socio-political and socio-educational thoughts

also Gandhi was found to be afraid of human potential. The world did not appear to him to be endowed with the great possibilities for the material and spiritual development of man.

Lastly, a few words may be said about the Gandhian technique of non-violent direct action called satyagraha. It has been highly eulogised from some quarter because it is supposed to enable the unarmed ordinary men and women to fight injustice and oppression. Gandhi himself wrote in the *Harijan* of 14th July, 1940 about the possible use of the method in three fields—against the ruling authority, against local conflicts within a community and against external aggression.

This method of struggle was, however, never tried against an external aggression. But Gandhi believed that it would be very effective even in this case. During the 1st World War he went to the extent of advising Allied Powers to disarm instantly which, he was sure, "would open Hitler's eyes". Naturally this piece of gratuitous advice was unceremoniously turned down by the Allies. Gandhi's reply was equally Quixotic when one American correspondent once wanted to know from him how he would use non-violence against an atom bomb. Gandhi replied "I would run into the open field and looking up towards God pray with folded hands that God may make the pilot see reason; and seeing me in this prayerful posture the pilot would not have the heart to drop the bomb". And so far as the resistance against the constituted government of the day is concerned, he is taken to have successfully done it in colonial India. But his role in this respect has been unduly magnified beyond all proportion. The British Government started transferring responsible power to India with the passing of the Government of India Act, 1919. The Act also provided that after a decade the constitutional position would be further reviewed for the transfer of the next dose of constitutional power. Accordingly the Government of India Act, 1935 was enacted. The process of decolonisation was completed when the Transference of Power Act was passed in 1947. Gandhi and his so-called satyagraha had hardly much to do with this process of the gradual transference of power. In fact, when the first chunk of power was transferred to Indian hands

in 1919, Gandhi was busy fully cooperating with the British and his Non-cooperation Movement was still a far cry. The process was followed up in 1935 to meet a constitutional obligation imposed by the former Act. Ultimately in 1947 a complete transference of power took place as a part of the world process of decolonisation. The 'Quit India' movement was a spent force long before that. Indeed, Gandhi's activities proved dangerous not so much to the British Government as to the left movement mainly inspired by Roy.

Not to speak of wresting power from the all-powerful ruling authorities, Gandhi's satyagraha proved largely ineffective even in dealing with local issues limited in nature. After returning to India he launched his first satyagraha in Champaran, a remote district of Bihar, where the almost entire arable land was owned by Englishmen and cultivated by the Indian tenant farmers. Under the tenancy terms each farmer was required to set apart 15 p.c. of his land for growing indigo and turn over all the indigo to the landlord concerned as rent. At that time indigo had a vast profitable market in Europe. But after the discovery of cheap synthetic blue dye at the beginning of the century, the natural indigo lost its marketability. But the Indian farmers were not aware of this new development. Taking account of their ignorance the English landlords introduced cash payment of their rent. After sometime the farmers realised how they were being cheated, and they now sued the landlords for full refund of the cash they had paid so far as rent. At the same time some of the farmers also approached Gandhi, a sadhu with "supernatural" powers, to come to their rescue. He started an agitation which led the Government to appoint the Champaran Agrarian Committees with Gandhi as one of its members. Although the farmers wanted Gandhi to stand for a full refund, the Committee unanimously recommended only for a 25 p.c. refund. Gandhi justified his stand on the specious plea that any repayment was an acknowledgement that the landlords had wronged the farmers, and he was more interested in the triumph of the principle than in the removal of an economic grievance of some farmers. All his other local satyagrahas too fared no better

Nextly, we shall proceed to examine how far the Indian people are free to take recourse to satyagraha amounting to civil disobedience against their democratically elected government. We may, of course, find the justification of such satyagraha in the observation of Jefferson that occasional popular uprisings of a moderate nature dramatise issues and keep governors responsive. But this is not much suited to a democratic regime. Since many effective constitutional channels of the ventilation of popular grievances including the ventilation of a peaceful change of the existing government are available in this regime, any extra-constitutional way of popular assertion should be ruled out. Besides, it undermines the citizen's respect for law which, in the long run, acts as a boomerang on the citizens themselves. Here we may recall that Gandhi himself would not permit the use of even such a widely approved method of direct action as strike in industrial concerns in the sovereign democratic India as it hampers national production. We would therefore do well to conclude that if democratic process of the country is found wanting, we may have to improve it instead of harming it. Even if the Gandhian method of struggle is taken to be very effective, it is not certainly an adequate compensation for lack of democracy in the Gandhian body politic.

But it has been already seen that satyagraha, as tested in practice even by Gandhi himself, was not a very fruitful method of struggle. Its non-violent character is also not beyond question. A number of pressure tactics like fasting, boycotting, picketting, etc. accompanied by "enough publicity" and masquerading as "self-suffering" constitutes the most vital part of it. And the limited success was mostly due to the application of these methods.

If in violence we have physical coercion, in non-violence the coercion is largely psychological which is worse than physical coercion. In effect, the non-violent state of Gandhi with all its non-violent tools would be a highly regimented state given to psychological coercion. It would be the terrestrial reflection of the teleological order. In the latter man is the vehicle of super-human Divine purpose whereas in the former the citizens will serve as the instrument of the operation of their

non-violent rulers. In contrast, Roy too relied upon the democratic tools of rational education, political propaganda, casting of votes, of recall, etc. These tools are also essentially non-violent in nature and are far superior to the non-violent tools of Gandhi like prayer and fasting for converting the hearts of adversaries.

NOTES

1. *Harijan* dated 28th September, 1934 and 28th November, 1936.
2. The verse 23 of the 16th discourse of the *Gita* has been interpreted by Gandhi as lending support to poverty.— *The Gita according to Gandhi*, p. 352.
3. The verse 1 of the 6th discourse of the *Gita* has been interpreted as giving support to *charka*.— *ibid*, p. 228.
So far as Gandhi sought the revival of the decadent cottage industries of India, he should be regarded as an anti dote to Rammohun.
4. See interpretation of verse 34 of the 3rd discourse. *ibid*, pp 178-179. See also *Harijan* for June, 1933.
5. Ved Mehta's *Mahatma Gandhi and His Apostles*, p. 219.
6. Pyarelal's *Last Phase*, pp 630-634.
7. Ved Mehta, *ibid*, p. 64.
8. *Ibid*, p. 214.
9. *Harijan* dated 15th September, 1946.
10. Tendulkar, *op. cit.*, Vol. VII, p. 53, also *Harijan* dated 25. 1. 45
11. *Ibid*, 13th October, 1940.
12. *Ibid.*, 15th June, 1947.
13. Rajagopalachari and Kumarappas (ed.) *The Nation's Voice* p. 18. Fischer's *A Week with Gandhi*, and Tendulkar's *Mahatma* Vol. III p. 248. The Gandhian constitution prepared by Agarwal and approved by Gandhi himself also confirms it.
14. *Harijan* dated 28th July, 1946.

(c) SOCIO-POLITICAL THOUGHT OF ROY

In his philosophy Roy has sought to project a Promethean image of man. But man is merely the *idea* of a collectivity existing in our minds. The concrete being is the individual. One is general and the other is particular. The general undoubtedly helps us to understand the particular but still the abstract should not be confused with the concrete. So when we descend from the philosophical plane to the concrete field of politics and economics, we are concerned with the individual man than with man in general. When man is pitted against a force exterior and allegedly superior to him, Roy has emphasised human freedom. But on the human plane itself he stood for individual freedom.

Although Roy was an unmitigated believer in individual freedom, he, unlike Gandhi and Aurobindo, had no anti-state bias. The ideal of a stateless society did not appear to him a feasible, or even a desirable proposition. He did not take the state to be necessarily coercive in nature and hence inconsistent with individual freedom. Rather he found it to be conducive to such freedom. Roy argued that the individual as the true unit is both chronologically and logically prior to a social union, and the birth of the state was a spontaneous process promoted, almost mechanically, by the common realisation of the necessity of cooperation for the security of all concerned and for the administration of public affairs. The state has thus been created by man for promoting his own interest in quest of freedom. It is one of the many institutions created by man "to serve the purpose of his being and becoming."

Roy was further of opinion that the society itself, like the state, was the creation of man. Aurobindo has made a distinction between the instinctive stage and the rational stage of the evolution of human society. Roy was not oblivious of this distinction. He contended that the instinct of cooperation was inherent in man the individual but the structure of social relationships was the conscious creation

of many individuals from their common realisation that by acting together they would make their respective struggle far more effective. That rational judgement laid the basis for the establishment of civil society. First the society and then the state were created by man to serve their ends. These institutions cannot therefore demand the subordination of their creators. If history has not a purpose or meaning independent of the purpose of its creators and participants, society has even still less so.¹

With the growing complexity of society the relation between the individuals on the one hand and the society and the state on the other has, no doubt, been blurred. But in no case should we lose sight of the *original* purpose of all socio-political organisations, which was to help the development of the potentialities of man as a biological organism. If therefore an existing social organisation is found to hinder the free development of man, it must be taken to have missed the original purpose of man's social existence and hence should be discountenanced. The welfare, happiness and freedom of individuals are thus the criteria by which big-sounding terms like national prosperity and social progress are to be measured.

It is true that to-day we are born into a society and abide by the rules and regulations in the making of which we have no hand. This has struck some of our sociologists as the essentially coercive character of society because much of what a person does appears to that person, if he reflects on it at all, as externally imposed obligations. We are told that it is "an action that is performed by us but that is not ours it has an anonymous, extra-individual origin." But this argument of sociologists should not be construed to mean that its origin is extra-human or even that it does not come from some individual human(s). The action can be explained only by looking at its historical origin.

But even in Roy was preoccupied with the issue of priority, he was not quite oblivious of the need for reciprocity too. He never minced matter to point out that

in a cooperative life an individual has to necessarily adjust himself to the needs, desires and sentiments of other human beings also. Roy was thus not opposed to state laws and regulations although he believed that with the growth of the rational and moral sense of individuals they would voluntarily abide by them and there will not arise many occasions for the exercise of its coercive authority by the state. Roy looked forward to a regime of social cooperation and mutual aid not so much by doing away with the coercive apparatus of the state as by developing the moral sense of ordinary men and women.

Here it may also be noted that for Roy there was no fundamental antagonism between law and freedom. He has traced the source of human reason to the law-governed universe and the establishment of society and the state to human reason. So he concluded in a deductive way that the laws of the state, like those of nature, are also rational. If by discovering the laws of nature, man has developed his physical science and enhanced his freedom, so by discovering the laws of society man can found social science and administer the social life in a way conducive to human freedom. Roy has reminded us that the social history of the human race is but a part of the history of life on earth and the latter but a part of a still larger natural process.

Roy, however, considered democracy to be the only form of government in which a reasonable balance can be struck between individual freedom and social welfare. But by democracy he meant a government almost in the literal sense of the term government *by the people*. It is in this sense that democracy was practised in the ancient city-state of Athens, and Roy wanted to have democracy practised once again in this sense in modern national states. A gnawing gap has developed between the theory of democracy and its modern practice. Roy sought to bridge this gap, and in this attempt he has shown a great deal of ingenuity.

Historical institutions often have way of growing beyond their origin so that in course of their development

they acquire a character which radically differs from the one they had at their inception. The forms which such institutions eventually attain and the functions which they come to discharge are produced not by design but in the casual manner of accidents and expedients.

The Parliamentary system of government with its mode of representation and the party system originated in England as the accidents of dynastic inheritance, and these accidents have since come to be regarded as necessary in principle. Initially the British Parliament was nothing but a feudal institution meant to serve the need of the King. It owed its origin to the feudal custom of periodically calling together the royal vassals (Barons) in order to talk over urgent matters. Then Edward I summoned the so-called Model Parliament in which two representatives from each borough and two knights from each shire were asked to meet in addition to the barons and the upper clergy. These representatives were called to enable the King to negotiate with them for grants of special taxes and getting their support for various undertakings of the royal government. Soon the representatives in their turn began insisting upon the amelioration of the grievances of their respective localities as a precondition of their giving assent to new tax proposals. Then when the Lancastrian house usurped the throne its kings became very cautious not to offend the Parliament because of their shaky title to the crown.

The process thus started reached its culmination during the Restoration period. In fact, the Restoration was not only a confirmation of the British monarchy. It also marked the assertion of the British Parliament and gave birth to the Parliamentary system of government. When James II embraced Roman Catholicism, a group in Parliament wanted to exclude him from succession to the throne but a majority of Parliament did not want to violate the hereditary principle for fear of likely disturbances. From the debate over the succession question of James II emerged the party system in Britain. At last William of Orange, a Protestant son-in-law of the king, was invited to come from Holland and occupy the throne. As William owed his appointment to the Parliamentary favour, he tried to keep

Parliament in good humour and adopted the principle of appointing his ministers from the majority party there. Then taking advantage of the indifference of the first two Hanoverian kings who were German princes not much interested in the domestic policy of Britain and who knew little English, Parliament became supreme reducing the Crown to figurehead.

The ascendancy of an intermediate body like Parliament did not, however, mean by itself a victory of the popular government. Parliament still retained its oligarchical character, only a limited group of property-owners having a representation in it. Then under the stress of circumstances franchise was progressively extended in 1832, 1867 and 1885 till the universal adult franchise was achieved as late as 1829.

The party system which, as we have seen, had started its career from a controversy over a strictly private affair of the king now acquired a new rationale. With the expansion of the electorate an urgency appeared of educating them on public issues and bringing order out of chaos by mobilising the hitherto undifferentiated masses into different camps on the basis of those different issues. Obviously a party mechanism alone could do it at that time, and for this purpose parties which had an intra-governmental origin began now consciously developing organisations among the electorates too. Parties further provided the basis for the formation of a government, and through them a relationship was sought to be established between a multiplicity of private interests and common good.

We should note here that the modern party-based representative democracy otherwise broadly known as Parliamentary democracy has not logically or historically developed from the practice of ancient Greece, cradle of the European civilisation. It was rather an accidental development from the exigencies of British monarchy. After the supersession of the Greek city states some sort of dynastic rule spread all over Europe. Even the Republican Rome ended in founding the great Roman Empire. Although the Britishers achieved their Parliamentary system more through their good fortune than through their exertion, it marked the first break through. Thereafter Britain maintained the continuity, and the British democracy proved to

be the most successful democracy in the world. It served as a model to others by showing how democracy could be practised in a modern nation-state through a representative-cum-party system. The theory thus remains the same but the practice has differed.

Roy wanted to revolutionise the current democratic practice to make it conform to the theory once again. He knew that democracy is one of degree and is being achieved by stages. With the progressive expansion of suffrage the *breadth* of democracy has widened almost to the furthest extent but it has not gained in *depth*. Merely putting a ballot paper inside a box at the interval of five years or so is a superficial democracy. The existing variety of democracy has run its course, and the time has come to take the next forward step. With a view to imparting the necessary depth to the democratic practice Roy has sought either to modify or to do away with the two intervening factors—system of representation and party system.

Etymologically 'to re-present' means 'to present again'. It thus comes to mean that an elected representative presents, on behalf of the voters of his constituency, a case which would have been presented by them, had they been physically present there. We find the recognition of this fact in the practice originally obtaining in England that representatives used to be paid by their respective constituency for undertaking the journey to the capital and staying there for pleading their case before the Crown in Parliament. Representation was a popular device in the West during the Early Middle Ages, i. e., centuries before the rise of nation-states. Now the principle of representation was drafted in democracy not because representative democracy was more desirable than direct democracy but because it made the practice of democracy *possible* on a large scale. In ancient Athens all the adult citizens used to meet frequently in an assembly at a particular venue and take decisions; and when citizens were found to be not in a mood to attend general meetings, they were encircled by a rope freshly painted red at the market place and driven towards the venue. The citizens move forward in that direction lest their clothes should be tainted by the colour of the rope. But what was practised in a city-state is not possi-

ble to-day in a nation-state. In the latter the entire population may exercise their franchise but their face-to-face assembly is impossible. So some sort of representation has to be willy-nilly adopted. Representative democracy is by its very definition a democracy by proxy.³

The great defect of democracy by proxy is that in the absence of a *standing* control of the people over their representatives, we often have the substitution of the will of the representatives for the will of the people. The evils of representation are further aggravated by the development of the party system. The representatives are almost all party candidates and had their loyalty more to their respective party than to their electorate even when they were not guided by the selfish motive. The party system has thus brought about the eclipse of the legislature, the principal organ through which representative democracy is destined to work.

Now a political party is a *part* of the society which is organised and active and acts on behalf of the people. Its motive force is somehow to win the elections and occupy the seats of power. For this purpose parties which had an intragovernmental origin have consciously developed organisations among the people outside the state-machinery. It is sheer party-cracy which now masquerades as democracy. Parties are necessarily partisan in spirit and represent various sectional interests under the cover of public interest. Even when elections are free and fair it cannot be said that they reflect the genuine will of the people. Through a tremendous suggestive propaganda parties succeed in inducing people to take unwarranted decisions just as they are coaxed to prefer cigarettes of a particular brand.

Roy was, however, conscious not only of the limitations of the modern party-based representative democracy but also the dangers it poses to democracy itself in a mass society. The Nazi movement in Germany and Communist movements in Europe recruited their members mostly from the masses of *apparently* indifferent people whom the democratic parties generally ignore as of little consequence. A sense of superfluousness and worthlessness drove them

towards the totalitarian movements.³

Roy wanted to broaden the basis of this narrow, if not totally fake, democracy, and in this attempt he would replace the party system by an alternative broad-based organisation of the people. He has exposed the sovereignty and free will of atomised individuals as fictitious. These individuals cannot assert themselves in the absence of their own organisation and have therefore to depend upon political parties. Roy would have the body of citizens of a country organised into a network of people's committees spread all over the country. These people's committees are to be the people's own organisations. At the time of election the committees of each constituency will meet together and set up their own candidate, and after the election is over, they will also guide and control him, and, if necessary, they can even recall him. A mere consent democracy will thus give place to participatory democracy. Roy has called his type of democracy as organised democracy as distinguished from the existing Parliamentary democracy.⁴

The studies of political sociologists reveal that it is not only partyocracy but also the democracy of the lobby otherwise known as plutocracy which is passing as the democracy of people and modern democracies are no better than oligarchies. In democracies electorates at best decide to-day merely which of the competing oligarchies is to decide for them. In keeping with this practice some sociologists have suggested the need of redefining democracy. Thus Duverger in his renowned work *Political Parties* (p 425) says- "The formula 'Government of the people by the people' must be replaced by this formula : 'Government of the people by an elite sprung from the people'." But this amounts to harnessing the goodwill of one for the cause of a quite different thing. If democracy is also oligarchical in nature, it must be regarded as a fraud and a hoax perpetrated upon the people.

In some quarters again even a semblance of the defence of lobby democracy has been given up, and the promotion of sectional interests is openly advocated as the aim of a democratic government. It is argued that public interest is not something

to be "artificially" imposed from outside. It must be made to emerge from a process where every interest, irrespective of numerical strength, has to be provided representation and public voice. Then the doctrine of concurrent majorities has carried the theoretical justification of interest representation to an absurd extent. According to this doctrine, the concurrence of every substantial interest must be secured in all legislations affecting that interest. If acted upon, it will give power to a minority to veto a majority decision. About 90 p. c. of the people—the people who have the greatest needs will be kept out of this pressure system, and the haves can maintain in tact the socio-political system which is already loaded in their favour.

Roy has found a remedy of this situation in a return to the original Greek ideal of democracy—an ideal which has been reaffirmed in modern times by Lincoln in his famous Gettysburg speech. It will save democracy from both partycracy and plutocracy,

Thus while Roy sought to stage a return to the classical Greek idea of democracy, he had to necessarily depart from the Greek practice. Some sort of representation is unavoidable in a large state but Roy wanted to supplement representation by the methods of direct legislation by the people. The introduction of such method is, of course, not at all an innovation. They began to appear almost immediately after representative democracy had come into vogue. Thus direct legislation appeared in France as early as 1793 and in Switzerland a decade after. Even to-day methods of direct legislation are being practised not only in Switzerland but also in some of the states of Australia and the USA. But what is new with Roy is the *machinery* he has ingeniously discovered for implementing the direct methods of legislation by the people. In those states where direct legislation is now being practised, recourse is taken to it only rarely and even then they have to play into the hands of political parties in the absence of their own instruments of power. Under Parliamentary democracy we can have only a *periodic* assessment of the elected representatives' responsibility by their respective electorate while organised democracy provides for a *daily* assessment.

The people's committees, organs of grass-root democracy, are to form the basic units of Roy's democratic state and will not only function as the organs of local government but will also exercise constant control over the higher organs of government at each stage i. e., the so-called "apex" of Gandhi and will thus have their say in national politics as well. This shows that although Roy did not visualise the abolition of the state, he provided for its dispersal and merging in the society at large by making the state "coterminous" with society and thus solving the traditional conflict between *jurisdictio* and *gubernaculum*. Roy worked for the withering away of the political parties and not of the state. The organisation and activation of the entire adult population of the country will hardly leave room for such parties. It is true that diverse groupings may crop up under partyless democracy too. But there, unlike now, no premium is to be put upon *fixed* groupings. Besides, should we abstain from treating a man at present simply because he may have a future attack ?⁵

It may be further noted that the primary people's committees will constitute the neighbourhood where self-reliant men and women are to enter into creative relations with the neighbours who will no longer remain mere high-dwellers. Man is not only a social being. He is more than that—a community being. Parties which generally represent interests tend to divide but the people's committees where people are to meet as citizens will necessarily unite. Atomised individuals will no longer be available for manipulation by totalitarian movement. Meaningful local relationships and meaningful participation in the governmental process will also put effective emotional barriers against the onslaught of totalitarian movements. The Gandhian panchayets, in contrast, are a number of pale bodies incapable of affording much emotional satisfaction to their members for these bodies are mostly entrusted with local functions only while it is the national issues which interest people.

For the successful working of the people's committees Roy has emphasised the need of people's education. His cryptic statement that we cannot travel faster than *light* is highly significant in this regard. He has, of course, never carved out

a detailed plan of education but still he has made it sufficiently clear that the education in which he was primarily interested has predominantly an intellectual content so as to make the individuals conscious of their potentialities as rational and as moral beings and thus generate in them an urge for freedom. At the same time a new public opinion has to be created "privately and unobtrusively" in the place of the existing one maintained by the press and other mass media of communication. The people's committees have a crucial role to play in this matter. Each committee would regularly meet once a month and discuss the principal issues of local and national concern. The decision-making would then be based upon informed, active and responsible thinking of citizens in small face-to-face groups who are to constitute the "true House of Commons". In that case, the people would no longer be available for indiscriminate use by the political parties and the mass media of communication also. The Renaissance Clubs organised in cooperation with local intellectuals cooperate with the people's committees in this matter.

Gandhi and Aurobindo too had an intense belief in education. Gandhi has, however, approached education from the standpoint of employment potentialities. So he has devised a craft-centred education, and he considered the introduction of craft in education as his unique contribution to the educational theory. And the guiding principle of Aurobindo's educational thought is the awakening of man as a "spiritual" being. Neither Gandhi nor Aurobindo had any interest in the intellectual enlightenment conceived by Roy.

Aurobindo pinned his ultimate faith in a "spiritual" elite and not in the people. That is why although he has criticised the prevailing representative democracy, he has not bothered himself with improving it or suggesting any alternative. Gandhi has, of course, professed to be an unmitigated democrat and has suggested two alternative forms of democracy—one as a short-term measure and the other as a long-term one. But, as we have already seen, he has made the evils of representation even more and more pronounced and characterised even a moderate dose of direct democracy as "shameless" and "mobocracy". He believed

in managerial politics, and his managers are responsible not so much to the people as to their conscience.

As regards the party system, Gandhi sometimes came down heavily upon the partisan spirit of the political parties, and even though he remained politically active throughout his life, he never accepted the membership of any party, not even of the National Congress. After the transference of power Gandhi wanted the transformation of the Congress into a *non-political* body called the Lok Sevak Sangh. All this, however, should not be construed to mean that he was opposed to party politics as such. Gandhi did not subscribe to Congress membership because the Congress accepted non-violence as a policy while it was a creed with him. He advocated the transformation of the Congress because the Indian people forged this great organisation to win the independence of the country, and after the accomplishment of its task he refused to have it downgraded to an ordinary political party. Gandhi had thus no objection to the functioning of *other* political parties in the country. As a matter of fact, Gandhi wanted that after the dissolution of the Congress as a political body, its different politically motivated segments should form their own parties to fight out their case. It is only after the death of Gandhi that the Sarvodayists have found in the Royist concept of partyless democracy a logical culmination of their political ideas and have incorporated it in their thought-process.*

For tracing the genesis of the idea of people's committees which formed the keynote of Roy's socio-political thought he has pointed to the Russian Soviets, the former being the Indian version of the latter. He has successfully integrated the idea of Soviets with the British Parliamentary system of government and has thus blazed a new trail. Unlike Gandhi and Aurobindo, Roy does not appear to have drawn any inspiration from the ancient Indian tradition of the panchayati system which had a caste-orientation and is highly controversial in character. While drawing inspiration from the Russian Soviets Roy has also drawn his lesson from their failure in communist Russia. Roy saw that the Soviets came to be associated with the communist system rather accidentally, and after the successful consummation

of the Revolution the Communist Party arrogated to itself all state powers and sent the Soviets into cold storage. The seed of his distrust of political parties was sown here, and so with a view to ruling out this eventuality in India Roy has given a permanent place to the people's committees in his scheme. He provided for an arrangement under which power would be *necessarily* captured by these committees and retained by them after the attainment of independence. Organised democracy is to grow directly out of the organised shape which Roy gave to the Indian revolution as a state within state. It means that the organs of struggle would serve as the organs of power.

Roy's enthusiasm for democracy was, however, tempered by an element of liberalism. He pleaded for the unhindered operation of the democratic process only within a demarcated, although large, area, i. e. in the constitution and functioning of the state organs. But he wanted to limit its range of activities. There are certain spheres of life which derive their significance from the individual content of life. Roy categorised this spheres as the Fundamental Rights of the citizens and kept them outside the purview of state interference—interference even by a full-fledged democratic state. In this concept of *limited* state Roy stood more or less on the same ground with Gandhi and Aurobindo.

The democratic thought of Roy was further modified by an elitist strand. He has visualised a transitional stage when the need for some form of tutelage has been emphasised to add to the *qualitative* content of democracy. A brute rule of the mere quantity is likely to degenerate into what Gandhi has called "mobocracy". To save democracy from such a degeneration Roy wanted it to be imbued with the respect for certain intellectual and moral values like freedom, tolerance etc. For this qualitative guidance Roy at first looked to a second chamber of his Parliament composed of the representatives of certain elite groups who would see that these values are adequately reflected in the state.² The men of quality are not, however, likely to be successful in a election, because the still largely immature people may not be in a position to assess their merit. So to make their service available to democracy these men must have to be

selected by the Head of the state. It means that at this stage democracy would be both elective and selective.

Roy, however, hoped that with democracy coming to maturity spiritually free and detached men and women would begin to "command the respect of an intelligent public" and come to the helm of public affairs. The problem of the moral leadership of a democratic community would be solved in this way. Democracy can now be wholly elective.

Thus starting from a diametrically opposite end Roy seems to have reached the same conclusion about the deliverance of man as Gandhi and Aurobindo. The latter two thinkers, as we have seen already, wanted the people to be imbued with the *anasakti* yoga of the *Bhagwadgita*. One might be struck by the close affinity of Roy's concept of disinterested persons with that of the karmayogis enunciated in the *Gita*. But the affinity is more apparent than real.

The karmayoga is based on a belief in the universal determinism of the Divine Will. Isvara is not merely external, but also our internal, Ruler. Our actions and desires are actually Lord's, and we are only His instruments. The consequences of all our actions should therefore be left to Him and we must remain engaged in the disinterested pursuit of our duties. In contrast, Roy has taken an altogether secular view of the concept of disinterested service and sought to trace it to Plato.⁹ His detached individuals who have "the power to resist the various temptations of life" are like Plato's philosopher-kings. Roy held that a man will gradually attain the status of a detached individual by becoming increasingly conscious of his own rational and moral nature. Ultimately he becomes an intellectually free agent capable of discriminating good from evil without being haunted by the presupposition that he is helplessly at the mercy of some capricious super-human power.⁹

Roy, however, wanted the Radical Humanists to act as the friends, philosophers and guides of the people without seeking power themselves. They will perform this function much better for having thus limited their ambition. This will also gain them the popular confidence all the more easily. A lecture of to-day must not, after all, be suspected to be the

candidate of to-morrow.

Before we finish this topic, we shall do well to see what was Roy's attitude towards non-violence and how far it differed from those of Gandhi and Aurobindo. Roy knew that as the legitimacy of the State weakens, violent confrontations involving individuals, groups and the establishment takes place over their respective claims to legitimacy, and this form of violence implies the greatest tribute to reason and justice. Roy saw that instead of overwhelming the British Government, the Gandhian leadership actually gave the Government control over the Indian protests. The Chaurichera incident of 1922 bears the most eloquent testimony to it. The Gandhian non-violence was no doubt a saintly thing but it kept the British in India longer. Ireland achieved Home Rule sooner by violence. Gandhi's ahimsa can at best achieve only a limited success on the individual plane and that too when the enemy is magnanimous and liberal-minded. But against a heartless system it is almost totally ineffective. Roy was further conscious of the fact that a non-violent struggle entails self-sacrifice which goes against the biological instinct of self-preservation. All these pre-suppositions of Roy eventually proved to be correct to a large extent when we find that during the last days of his life Gandhi himself had to admit failure. It is, of course, clear that Roy did not consider the use of force under all circumstances as an evil. Under certain circumstances he rather regarded its use as a moral duty. To him it would appear as a travesty of morality that good men should allow themselves to be annihilated because of the fond hope that the oppressors might change their hearts at some distant future. He would insist that force, like money, is ethically neutral and can be used to serve both good and bad purposes. In fact, the Gandhian non-violence may avoid physical coercion but there is hardly any doubt that it contains a good of mental coercion in the form of blackmailing, etc. Without making a fuss over non-violence Roy, however, applied himself steadfastly to improving the tools of democracy. This also did not escape the notice of Roy that Gandhi's non-violent activities provoked rioting even though quite unintentionally, and he could not control this violence. During their heydays the British Government could

do much more in preventing communal violence.

Although Aurobindo had no objection to accept ahimsa as a policy under certain circumstances, he was one of the foremost leaders to initiate a violent trend in Indian politics, and his critical remarks about non-violence to an emissary of Gandhi is reported to have estranged the latter permanently from the Pondicherry asram. Soon after the Swadeshi movement, however, Aurobindo transcended both violence and non-violence and came to pin faith exclusively in the descent of a spiritual force from above upon a few individuals. Roy had no faith in any spiritual force and relied wholly on the moral force of democracy.

ECONOMIC THOUGHT

Roy's theory of consumption, like those of Gandhi and Aurobindo, determined his theory of production. Since he entertained an Epicurean view of life and believed in the "dignity of desires", he did not stand for the limitation of human wants. The enjoyment of good things on earth was also not an anathema to him. So he would encourage the diversification and multiplication of human wants. This means that he was guided by the concept of material adequacy without being committed to commodity-fetishism. With a view to achieving this end, he advocated the mechanisation of the productive process for augmenting the productivity of labour.

One of the principal considerations which led Gandhi to oppose industrialisation of the country was that she had no colonies to absorb her surplus industrial goods—an advantage which was available to the pioneering Western countries. To-day India could not hope to get them except through war. Roy admitted its relevance but asserted that India would not be industrialised in the way of West had been. Instead of finding outlets outside, India would have to tap the vast potential market *inside* the country itself. India is not a small country and not sparsely populated; and the 80 p. c. of her population is engaged in agricultural operations. These people almost entirely live below the poverty line. Their purchasing power can be

much improved if the productivity of the agricultural sector can be increased manifold and the cultivators are allowed to retain a good part of the benefit of this increased productivity by slashing down considerably the rent paid by them at present and by abolishing the illegal exactions including usury to which they are subjected. A part of the surplus from the agricultural sector may also be utilised for importing machinery, etc. for the industrial sector from the advanced industrialised countries.

Thus we see that the problem of Indian industrialisation is not so much of capital formation as of labour organisation. Roy ruled out Gandhi's objection on this count and conceived an alternative way of industrialising the country. The agricultural development is, however, not only the *sine qua non* of the industrialisation of India. As agriculturists constitute the vast majority of Indian population, the economic development of India can have no meaning without the improvement of their hard lot. Besides agriculture satisfies the basic needs of man and supplies raw materials for various industries. At least man must produce food and eat before he can diversify his life. In fact, prosperous agriculture is indispensable for a country in both peace and war. Roy was therefore led to accord primacy to agriculture.

In this respect Roy is akin to Gandhi. With Gandhi, however, agriculture was more than a mere means of satisfying the physical and economic needs of man. Farming, like villagism, was *also* a way of life with him. This, of course, means that rural life must not be urbanised. It must be encouraged to retain its distinctive character—folk music and dancing, sports, festivals, early rising, cottage industries and other typical rural activities. Roy was not certainly to go to the same extent with Gandhi, he being not at all against urbanisation and power-industries. He felt no nostalgia for lost pastoralism.

Roy wanted to augment the productivity not only of agricultural labour but also of industrial labour. With this end in view he depended upon the use of mechanical power. This will raise productivity by augmenting output per person employed but will also increase the number of persons employed. Unlike Gandhi, Roy has not polarised the issue between labour and machine.

Pollution is one of these side-effects most talked of. Roy did not seem to be much concerned with the side-effects of the use of mechanical power. He had the faith in human reason and goodwill and believed that these side-effects can be controlled sooner than later. In fact, the more electricity will be used in place of coal and oil, the easier will be the solution of the problems of pollution. The key to the removal of the side-effects of modern technology is no advanced technology. Moreover, pollution is not the cost of technology in itself. It is the result of a shift from the possession of the technology by the few to the right of all. Half a century ago, pollution did not pose so much threat as it is doing now. But since technological innovations are no longer the privileges of the upper class people and to-day any man can own a car, the problem of pollution has cropped up. Obviously it is an indication of the drive towards social justice. Gandhi was not therefore entirely right when he said that the polarisation of classes is inherent in modern technology. Every civilisation has been based on technology but what makes our present civilisation unique is that for the first time in history it is being widely recognised that each man is entitled to all its benefits. It means that technology has now become a moral, and not merely a material, necessity.

Roy was not also on the same ground with Gandhi when he advocated cutting the size of the productive units to human proportions. The choice before Roy was not simply between a technology for large-scale production and the crude traditional technology. As in many other spheres, here also he appears to have explored a third way: an alternative technology which Schumacher has called intermediate technology. It is vastly superior to the primitive technology of by-gone days but at the same time much simpler and freer than the super-technology of the rich. It would turn a wage-earning society into a largely self-employed one and would serve the human person instead of making him a servant of machines. Pending the descent of the Supramental consciousness, Aurobindo would also like to curtail the size of the industrial units but how far he was in favour of evolving an alternative technology is a matter of serious doubt. For it would involve a good deal of time and

energy, and Aurobindo did not like the people to spend much time and energy on "external work".

What is required for evolving an alternative technology is to give a new orientation to applied science. As we have seen before, applied science came to be applied to the cause of mass production simply as an accident of history. Otherwise there is no necessary relation between the two. The relation was established only because a lot of money was available for it. So there is no reason why applied science cannot be reoriented to devise simple and cheap but effective machineries suitable for individuals and small groups working mainly for their own subsistence and catering to the needs of local markets. This would rectify the wrong start made by applied science and reverse the process of economic evolution of the last two or three centuries.

As Ralph Borsodi's researches show, mass production and mass distribution are not always justified even economically. For the economics of mass production are in most cases offset by the increased costs involved in mass distribution to distant markets. The new technology would at least entail less social cost in terms of less employment, disparity of income, pollution and alienation. If in a country using the technology of mass production an attempt is made to deal with some of its side-effects, it would add to the economic costs, and there would also be less production of new goods and services because of the diversion of a sizeable chunk of capital. At any rate, the total product of a community would not suffer under intermediate technology. The contribution of the hitherto unemployed labour to the total product would more than compensate the loss, if any, in the total product as a result of the use of less capital.

But, after all, if the yearning of man to be human involves an increase in the cost of production, it is worth paying. The economic consideration, however important, must not be given primacy. Man should be made the measure in the economic sphere too. The use-value of a thing must thus get predominance over its exchange-value. Our present obsession with economic issues is as degrading as the obsession of the mediaeval man with the religious issue. A more humanly satisfying life must be placed above the so-called economies of large-scale produc-

tion. Besides, we should not forget that growth beyond a certain limit results in cancer. What is needed is an equilibrium society and not an over-producing and over-consuming one. The cult of ceaseless economic growth has led man to surrender to technology.

Here Roy's attitude towards property may be noted. Property provides an individual with a basis on which he has to build up his power of personal decision and a sphere in which he is to exercise the power of a free man. Roy thus advocated not the abolition of private property but for its diffusion. Things should be so arranged that a man of small means may hire a small machine on payment of a suitable rent ; he may also own it on a hire-purchase system. Further, a few men of small means may form a cooperative society to purchase and operate a small machine. If we are to create a healthy society of free and self-reliant individuals, maximum opportunity must be given to small producers and distributors. The type of political decentralisation which Roy has visualised cannot but end in a fiasco unless it is accompanied by a parallel process of economic decentralisation.

Roy often spoke of the cooperative economy as against the capitalist and the socialist economies, a cooperative economy being the economic expression of a cooperative way of life. But a cooperative unit of a large size would be no less managerial. The ownership of an economic unit cannot make much difference to the internal logic of modern technology and overcome the imperatives of mass production. A cooperative too must necessarily be small.

In fact, side by side with the people's committees serving as the basic unit of a decentralised democratic state, each locality would have its own multi purpose cooperative society as the nucleus of a decentralised democratic economy. State planning would only consist in coordinating on a regional basis the activities of these *autonomous* cooperative institutions, and the appropriate methods of coordination in such planning should be conferences and consultations among the cooperatives themselves. A cooperative economy would make the units of production and appropriation co-extensive.

But in those fields where large-scale production will not be technologically feasible large units have to be tolerated as necessary evils. Gandhi wanted the nationalisation of these units but Roy was not favourably disposed towards nationalisation because the transfer of the ownership of productive units to the people through nationalisation is more fictitious than real. Formal ownership does not give them any effective control over these units. Far from improving the quality of their life socialism would further spell the danger that even moderately self-reliant men and women would be reduced to so many cogs in a vast bureaucratic machine. In such units of large size work should be decentralised and departmental workers encouraged to form cooperatives. Alternatively, the respective trade unions may be encouraged to purchase an adequate number of shares in the industry so that they can be in a position to control the management of these units.

In short, managerial economy, like managerial polity, has to be avoided ; and the entire socio-economic structure has to be built up from below to avoid alienation inherent in large-scale administrative and productive units. Self-managed small and a bit larger units with electricity as the power-motif should replace the cult of giganticism and nationalisation.

Roy saw that man started his social career with some sort of self-management in village democracy. The general equilibrium was then upset by the love of power of the few in the political sphere and by the love of profit in the economic sphere. With the re-introduction of multi-dimensional self-management a new general equilibrium is to be established once again on a higher level. In the economic field also, what Roy wanted is a community of persons and not just an impersonal association of men for production. Democracy too is rendered stronger to the extent people unite freely for common action.

As regards agriculture which supplies the basic needs of the people Roy wanted them to start with local resources and local talents. An improved irrigation system is perhaps the first requirement of the development of our agriculture. This can be met by providing innumerable wells, tanks, canals, etc. The problem of manure can be similarly solved by utilising the cattle

ding which is being mostly wasted for fuel at present. The problems of purchasing and selling can also be tackled by the people themselves on their own initiative. Local service-cooperatives may be formed by the agriculturalists to meet their different needs. Subsidiary agro-industries can also be organised on a local cooperative basis.

Here we may point out that the new agricultural technology of biological-chemical variety which has practically ushered in a Green Revolution in the country has been captured by the large proprietors of land. As has been the case with the industrial technology, gains from the new agricultural technology has been reaped by those having access to money-capital and political power. But the new technology is itself neutral to scale. If the resource support is given and if a land-ceiling is sincerely implemented and the surplus land redistributed among the tillers, both output and employment will be greatly enhanced. A large-size has the potential only to produce more profits for the farm-owner, as is the case with the industrial units.

Roy, like Gandhi and Aurobindo, did not seek the forced expropriation of the existing mill-owners. But the anti-democratic ideal of trusteeship had no appeal for him. Roy wanted to give them the option either to continue as now and compete with the new economy or to become integrated into it. If they decide to remain independent, Roy was sure that they will not be capable of evading the fate of ultimate extinction due to the "impossibility to compete with a non-profit-making economy sustained by the cooperative efforts of practically the entire society"¹⁰. The problem of the existing concentration of wealth will thus be solved without taking resort to coercion even if the capitalists do not undergo any change of heart. But to achieve this purpose the cooperative movement must play an aggressive role. A merely defensive warfare against capitalism would not give any permanent result.

Implications for man. Roy has called himself a materialist, and materialism for him is not a purely rationalist doctrine of thought. It attached equal importance to human will and endeavour. Utopian social engineering was thus inherent in his materialist outlook of life.

In fact, the social thought of Roy is merely the applied side of his philosophical thought. He came to conclude that since man is born of a common process out of the background of the law-governed universe, ordinary individuals cannot differ much in inherent capacities. Under congenial condition these inherent potential capacities can be made actual. Roy could thus visualise more or less an extreme form of democracy both in political and economic spheres and think of building up to socio-political life of the country from the bottom because he had great faith in the potential capacities of ordinary men and women.

Under the Royist scheme of comprehensive democracy people would for the first time become articulate through their respective local committees and would no longer be the drum-driven cattle of this or that group. The committees may organise lectures, discussions, games etc. These are the instruments forged by the people to serve as the instruments of the people's power. Thus they would make representation possible without the delegation of their sovereign power. They will always remain vested this power and capable of exercising it. Without an organisation of their own individuals necessarily remain atomised and helpless and fall easy victims to manipulations and manoeuvrings from outside. In fact, organisation is a marvellous instrument with which we do marvels and modern civilisation is largely the product of organisation.

The local people's committees are expected to take the initiative of organising local cooperative institutions but in the absence of these committees the cooperative institutions can in their turn constitute the local units of a democratic political structure. Although in conceiving these committees Roy has drawn his inspiration from Russian soviets, we cannot say that the conception is completely divorced from the Indian ethos. Our ancient village democracies, purified and bereft of the caste orientation, could have easily served as models for Roy.

Further, a participatory democracy in face-to-face groups will serve to rehabilitate man psychologically as community being. But Roy was at the same time conscious of the fact that man enjoys a type of freedom in a vast anonymous society and small organisations tend to press heavily upon its members.

This is one of the main reasons why he attached so much importance to a Renaissance movement. It is to teach the citizens the values of freedom. Roy has also sought to protect the fundamental freedoms of the citizens in the shape of Fundamental Rights. As a matter of fact different *kinds* of development are favoured by different *kinds* of intellectual framework, and the members of an organisation have to *desire* what is objectively *necessary* for them to do. Roy has indeed endeavoured to secure the welfare of man as an individual and the welfare of man as a member of the community through his scheme of organised democracy.

Then, while emphasising the importance of small economic units, Roy did not eschew the application of science in the production process. He did not condemn man to a meagre and harsh existence in the midst of resources which then become technologically meaningless to him. A simple living must not be equated with forced poverty. The question of a voluntary limitation of wants can arise only when there is abundance. Roy has nowhere stated it in clear terms but we are sure he would not be averse to placing everything in and on this earth in the possession of all mankind by abolishing "the restrictions of the politics of money". Money is the creation of scarcity, and technology destroys the basis of its value by producing abundance.

Lastly, we should note that Roy has not given us any *fixed* conception of good life. He has only provided a *procedure* by which goals can be defined for the time being by the people themselves and modified as circumstances and opinions change.

NOTES

1. Roy's *Politics, Power and Parties*, pp. 33, 37 and 106, also his *Reason, Romanticism and Revolution*, Vol. II pp. 277 and 283.
2. See the author's article 'Representative Democracy' in *Radical Humanist* dated 10th March, 1968.
3. See the article "Mass Politics and People's Committees" in *Radical Humanist* for December, 1963.
4. For the different practical aspects of the working of partyless democracy see the author's *Political Thought of M. N. Roy* Chapter "Is Partyless Democracy Possible".

Democracy has been characterised as government by discussion. But the party system vitiates the spirit of democratic discussions. As has been pointed out by Barker in his *Reflections on Government* 'Democracy is not only like war ; it is also like love. It is not only a battle of ideas ; it is also a marriage of minds'. The self-governing religious congregations of the 17th century like those of the Anabaptists, the Quakers and the Independents used to carry on their discussions to reach a consensus.—See the author's article "A Government by Discussion" In *Radical Humanist* dated 31st March, 1968.

6. Ellen had to lodge a mild protest when Jaiprakash mentioned Gandhi as the author of the concept of partyless democracy. *Radical Humanist* dated 20th April, 1958 under the heading "Ideas Anonymous".
7. Roy's *Draft Constitution*, Articles 36, 59, 60 and 110.
8. Roy's *Beyond Communism*, p. 77.
9. Roy's *Reason, Romanticism and Revolution*, Vol. II, pp 271 and 297. Also See his *New Orientation*, p. 251.
10. Roy's *Radical Humanism*, p. 54.

WORLD SITUATION AND WORLD INSTITUTIONS

This discussion of the social thought of our three leaders will not, however, be complete without a discussion of how they propose to deal with the world situation. The outbreak of two World Wars in quick succession and the threat of a third World War show that the world situation has also gone beyond the control of man. Two major attempts have been made first in the League of Nations and then in the United Nations' Organisation to give man this control. But neither of them has become particularly successful.

Roy attributed their failure to their being inter-national organisations, and inter-nationalism presupposes nationalism. Standing on the threshold of the anti-fascist war and with the immediate prospect of the transference of power looming large, Roy came to realise that nationalism has outlived its utility. *Within* a state diverse vested interests thrive under the collective concept of nation. So against the concept of nation he advanced the concept of people considered distributively and not collectively. *Between* the states nationalism encourages chauvinism and war-mentality giving rise to fascism. In fact, Roy found an irreconcilable contradiction between world cooperation and the existence of national states. "A world composed of national states", said he, "can never have peace; in apparently peaceful times, they carry on through diplomacy" Roy refused to attach any special sanctity to an accident of birth in any particular territory.

Roy wanted a world organisation in the place of the present inter-national organisation. The members of this world organisation will not be appointed by the respective nation-states. They are to be elected by the people from constituencies all over the world. Roy was of opinion that a world organisation can function effectively only if an adequate number of individuals can expand their mental circumference beyond nationalism and cultivate the spirit of cosmopolitan humanism

The world government as conceived by Roy would thus not be a federation of the existing nation-states. It would be a cosmopolitan commonwealth of free men—an intellectual community not limited by the boundaries of nation-states. What indeed Roy wanted was to disengage the disinterested intelligence from the entanglements of party, sect and nation to set operating over the whole range of human life and circumstances. He assumed that the common interests of ordinary folk are the same whether they live in India or in England. They need cooperation and not "defence" by armed forces. In that case, each government is only an instrument by which its citizens assist the citizens of other states. In this connection we may recall that the nation-state has not always been the form of government nor is it likely to remain so for ever. The development of a world government may not be immediately realisable but the fate of mankind certainly hangs on it and it has to be brought into being, if not now, at least in the foreseeable future.

The Mahatma appears to have had no objection to the building up an inter-national body like the U. N. O. But for the preservation of world peace he did not look to it so much as the non-violent way of functioning of the nation-states. Obviously he did not outgrow the nationalist feeling and, in fact, he was the architect of one of the vast national states of the world. The problem that confronted Gandhi was how to take any one state out of the those who believed in the violent way of solving the international disputes. Practical politics requires the elimination of such influences *within* the states of the world before peace *between* states is to be ensured.

Gandhi, however, conceded that in the absence of perfect belief in non-violence there might be a world police to keep order. He contended that it would be "a concession to human weakness, not . . . an emblem of peace". This international force should be in the nature of a *shanti sena* or peace brigade than a modern fighting force commanding an unlimited power of destruction.

Aurobindo, like Gandhi, was not opposed to nationalism and did not think the existence of scores of national states to be incompatible with the creation of a world-state: an interna-

tional organisation. He wanted only a federation of them. But unlike Gandhi, he did not depend upon their non-violent way of functioning to maintain world peace. Like Roy, he argued that the world institution would not work unless it was informed by feeling of human brotherhood. But he differed from Roy when he emphasised that this ideal of human unity would not spring from a mere intellectual realisation of the need for a world community. What he wanted was the propagation of a "spiritual" religion of humanity based upon the growing realisation that there is a secret spirit in which we are all one and the human race is "the highest vehicle on earth" by which it will progressively reveal itself here. Aurobindo thus did not depend upon a set of ethical rules for regulating the international life of man but looked a "spiritual" oneness. He worked for the descent of the Supramental consciousness for changing man's consciousness and making him capable of mastering the entire cosmic movement by inner spiritual means and methods.

High-sounding ideals like human unity and non-violence are not altogether worthless. They are indeed good so far as they go but, truly speaking, they do not go far enough. Roy has rightly pointed out that the common interests of common men are the same everywhere, and in the last resort it is they who decide whether we are to live at peace or go to war again. They must therefore be provided with suitable education organisation to decide wisely and assert fully. The frame of reference within which one does one's thinking determines the nature of one's conclusions. Thus Euclidean postulates lead us to reach the conclusion that the three angles of a triangle are equal to right angles. So starting from nationalistic postulates we cannot but arrive at armaments, centralisation of power, war, etc. At the same time we must not forget that basic patterns of thought and feeling cannot be changed overnight.

THE CONFRONTATION

From times immemorial India became the centre of a ground of two rival thought currents. *The Hindu doctrine of God* and *Aryan racial doctrine of nature*. The *Hindu* had its great

est exponent in the Vedanta, and the *Svabhavavad* found its most characteristic expression in a host of complimentary philosophies like Samkhya, Nyaya, Vaiseshika and the Lokayata and also in such scientific disciplines as Ayurveda and Jyotirvidya. The Vedanta was the official ideology of the privileged minority— the Kshatriyas and the Brahmins for it served their class interests most by deluding the exploited masses and making them reconciled to their hard lot. Hence it came to enjoy the patronage and financial backing of the privileged classes and eventually became the most powerful philosophy of the country. Consequently, not so much a belief in God as an allegiance to the Vedic view of life constituted the essence of Indian theism. The dharmasastras too upheld this view. Thus buttressed, the Vedanta was on the war-path since its inception and annihilated in successive ages all naturalistic-rationalistic movements whenever they made their appearance on the Indian scene. The rationalistic-naturalistic movements drew their main support from the traders and artisans, i. e., the classes connected with the process of production. The *dhnyas* who were the ruling classes saw in the emergence of these movements a threat to their privileged position. The ascendancy of Buddhism made them particularly nervous.

We find the same scene reenacted in modern India also. The Vedantic movement which was started by Rammohun at the beginning of the 19th century was brought to the highest pitch by Vivekananda towards its close, thus killing in the process the rationalist thought-currents released in the body politic by the secular English education. Then coming to the 20th century we find that because of his exploits in the USA Vivekananda had become the idol of the Indian nationalists and the rising nationalist movement had acquired a Vedantic colouring. Aurobindo and Gandhi were the most powerful exponents of this Vedantic nationalism. From now on the purely religious movement and the political movement started reinforcing each other, and the Vedantic ethos became now strongly entrenched in the backward Indian society.

M. N. Roy who had his 're-birth' in Mexico confronted these two leaders at the pinnacle of their glory.¹ He was not unacquainted with the naturalistic legacy of ancient India. But

he drew his inspiration mainly from the more mature naturalistic-rationalistic tradition of the West with a rich humanist content. The naturalistic tradition is most akin to the scientific spirit and, when interpreted properly, must culminate in some sort of secular humanism. The texts of the naturalistic tradition of ancient India were, however, corrupted by their Vedantic commentators and the tradition itself virtually lost its continuity after the defeat of the Buddhist revolution. Roy quickened it once again and re-validated it in the light of the modern scientific knowledge which had its birth in Europe.

Protagoras, an ancient Greek philosopher, made two significant statements in his work *Truth or the Rejection* which laid the basis of humanism. The two statements were (1) "Man is the measure of all things", and (2) "I have no means of knowing whether gods exist or not". These two statements taken together mean that in this world man with his rationality is central and gods have no influence upon human affairs. But with the establishment of Christendom a religious ethos emerged in which man no longer remained the measure of everything. It came to be believed now that man could attain salvation through piety and not through knowledge. The Renaissance then saw the revival of Greek humanism. It was further strengthened by the French Enlightenment which has been characterised as the Second Renaissance. Comte, a late product of the French Enlightenment, even went to the extent of preaching a secular religion of humanity. Humanism degenerated in his hands because he prescribed all the paraphernalia of a traditional religion—a goddess of humanity with her temples, priests, rituals, festivals, etc. He also introduced a positivist calendar. All these made humanism a subject of ridicule. In course of the second half of the 19th century Comte's religion of humanity with all its paraphernalia was introduced in India also.²

Roy who had drunk deep in the Renaissance literature of Europe rescued the original spirit of humanism from under the doors of the Positivist religion of humanity and restated it in the light of modern scientific knowledge. But while going to do that, Roy has added a new dimension to the cult of man. The traditional European humanism sought to rehabilitate man against

God the alleged Creator whereas the newness of Roy's New Humanism consists in the fact that he has *also* emphasised the sovereignty of man the creator over his created institutions. New Humanism is thus more comprehensive than old Humanism and is more suited to the requirements of the modern era.

Speaking in modern terms we may now say that Roy, a *svabhavayadin*, was a man of the Renaissance, and the two *Isvaravadins*, Aurobindo and Gandhi, belonged to the tradition of the Reformation. In Europe the Reformation confronted the Renaissance from its very inception and was eventually defeated by it. But in India where the forces of reaction were much greater reverse became the case. The 20th century started its career in India with the dice heavily loaded against rationalism. Politics has now come to be the order of the day and sets the direction in which the country is to move. So while the Vedantic spirit invaded the specific field of our growing political movement, a new wave of rationalist movement too linked itself with it. The politico-Vedantism too linked itself with it. The politico-Vedantism and the politico-rationalism are the political affiliations of the new Vedantic and rationalist movements. This political affiliation distinguishes these movements from the preceding century when the rising political movement of the country started flowing in a different channel from both the Vedantic and rationalist movements alike. Two giants—a yogi, and a mahatma thus came cross swords with another giant—a rationalist.

Roy's effective participation in politics, however, began only after his coming out of the Indian jail in 1937, and he now blossomed forth into a full-fledged critic of Gandhism. Aurobindo did not come within his critical purview in big way^a for he had completely withdrawn from the active political life long ago and Gandhi had replaced him as the high-priest of Indian nationalist movement. Besides, Roy's criticism of Gandhism covered Aurobindoism also so far as it assailed the magico-religious view of life. It is true that even before his debut on the Indian political scene after a long absence he had challenged the Gandhian leadership from abroad. But although he had been already converted into a materialist philosophy, his objection to Gandhism at that time remained more on the socio-

political, than on the philosophical, plane. He argued that the Gandhian political programme had little relevance for the capture of power by the Indian people and his economic programme was not adequate to meet their needs. It is only after his return to India and release from jail that Roy made the philosophical basis of Gandhism also a target of his attack. British jails were not very rigorous for upper-class prisoners. There they got some facilities for reading and writing and ample leisure for thinking which would not otherwise be available for busy leaders. We know that "creative individuals" often "withdraw" from the field of action to "return" on a higher intellectual plane.

Roy made some brisk thinking during the few years of his prison-life, and after his release he added a new dimension to his political thought. He now came to the conclusion that it is not only that rational politics cannot be practised in an atmosphere surcharged with irrationalism but also that basically India's political slavery is the outcome of his spiritual slavery. India is a vast country with a rich legacy of civilisation but still she has repeatedly fallen a victim to attacks from a handful of foreigners hailing from great distance. He therefore started a unique intellectual movement called the Indian Renaissance movement in the country with a view to delivering the Indian mind from the bondage to the religious mode of thought and founded the Indian Renaissance Institute at Dehra Dun, his headquarters, to promote and guide the movement. The Renaissance movement is to proceed side by side with the socio-political movement. Roy thus appeared on the Indian scene not only with an alternative socio-political programme but also with an alternative philosophy of life.

Even from the high pedestal of the Mahatma, Gandhi could not ignore Roy for long¹. While Roy was still abroad, Gandhi joined issue with him over the nature of Bolshevism and cast a subtle fling at him by stating: "But I hope, I am almost sure that real bolshevism is much better than Mr. M. N. Roy's."² But this opposition increased in volume and intensity when Roy, after returning to India and finishing his jail-term, joined the Indian National Congress. He did it for fighting Gandhism from

within with the help of Jawaharlal. Initially his membership of the Congress raised high hopes in the Congress High Command that he would now come to terms with Gandhism. They wanted Roy but minus his Royism. Subsequent history, however, belied these hopes. Gandhi and Roy clashed on the very first occasion they met.

In December, 1936, i.e., barely one month after his release from jail, Roy joined the Faizpur session of the Congress.⁶ A V. I. P. treatment admissible only to a member of the Working Committee was accorded to him at this session. But Roy was not the man to be won over in this way. Here he opposed the Gandhian technique of struggle, with that learnt from American and French Revolutions. He raised for the first time in this country the slogan of Constituent Assembly not merely "as a challenge to the self-assumed sovereignty of the British Parliament" but also as the foundation of a parallel state having the shape of organised democracy. After his speech a significant silence came to prevail for sometime. Then Rajendra Prasad, a faithful follower of the Mahatma, stepped forward and replied: "The programme of the Constituent Assembly and alternative leadership has been placed by Com. M. N. Roy. That is a way, no doubt, but it is not the Gandhian way and as such it is not our way". This clash of ideas was, however, mainly on the socio-political plane.

But that very day a clash occurred on the philosophical plane as well and that with the Mahatma himself. At the end of the day's session Gandhi invited Roy to attend his prayer meeting. But the arrogant rationalist politely refused by saying: "Gandhuji, my faith in the efficacy of prayer is not great." The Gandhian leadership of the Congress now realised that it would not be easy to swallow Roy. At least he was not Nehru. A Roy-Gandhi parley was, of course, arranged after the prayer meeting but no common ground found. Henceforward the Gandhian leaders turned their face away from him. When the Mahatma returned to the asram at Sabarmati after the Congress session, he advised his disciples to ignore Roy "completely as if he did not exist politically for he was 'too dangerous a man even to be criticised'". Gandhi declared: "He strikes at my very roots."

Soon after it, Roy began feeling acutely the need of an organ as his mouthpiece. He could not think of bringing out a daily. But it must be at least a weekly. Accordingly Roy wrote to some eminent Congress leaders seeking their support and good wishes. Jawaharlal and Subhas Chandra responded promptly welcoming the "venture". But the Mahatma's reaction was altogether different. He advised Roy to render his "mute service" to the country. "I prefer your silence" wrote Gandhi.⁸ But Roy naturally failed to oblige him. He raised subscriptions from his small circle of admirers and started a weekly journal named *Independent India* from Bombay. The first issue was published on 4th April, 1937, and since then it came out regularly every week during his life-time.⁹

Side by side with editing the journal Roy started writing books, brochures, etc. in which the religious view of life has been mercilessly assailed. As a part of the Renaissance publications Roy brought out in 1940 a book captioned *Science and Superstition* in which he has made a searching analysis of such "supernatural" phenomena and assumptions as the psychology of seers, transmigration of soul, etc. In an inner-circle meeting Patel drew the attention of Gandhi to the book and wanted to know from him whether he had seen it. Gandhi, as we know, was not habituated to reading books. So he answered in the negative and desired to get from his associate an idea about the contents of the book. After getting the idea, the Mahatma remarked— "Mark him, he is the enemy number one".¹⁰

The battle lines were thus drawn. But from the beginning Roy had to make his way against heavy odds. He was, no doubt, intellectually brilliant and had a direct experience of various socio-political movements in both the hemispheres of the globe. He could thus bring to bear on his analysis of national and international events an amount of erudition and experience which no other Indian leader possessed. But for his public career all this proved to be a handicap rather than a blessing. He always looked ahead and was easily misunderstood. The powerful nationalist press systematically blacked him out or misrepresented him. He had only a small weekly as his central organ. The religion-believing superstitious people could not also

understand his language. So he had to take upon himself the task of creating a new audience of his own by building up a Renaissance movement almost from a scratch.

The opposite camp, on the other hand had not only tremendous resources at its disposal. It had also the entire nationalist press within its grip. Above all, the socio-cultural backwardness of the Indian people made them very much receptive to magico-religious ideas of Aurobindo and Gandhi.

In fact, coming to the 20th century we find in the country the peculiar phenomenon of a host of political yogis of whom Aurobindo was the most prominent. From the beginning of his Pondichery life he had been trying incessantly to verify the existence and powers of the Supermind, and he got this verification with the alleged descent of the Overmind in him on 24th November, 1926. Now the Overmind being the highest of the intervening ranges between the mind and the Supermind is full of lights and powers. From now on therefore a new and higher consciousness began operating in the world. And with the descent of the Overmind into the body of the Pondichery saint, it had become ready for the Supramental descent itself. Aurobindo himself testified that in 1934 the Supermind was ready to descend but not a single sadhu was then prepared to receive it. So it withdrew. Had there been 30 or 40 people ready, it could have descended.

All these were, however, the subjective experiences of Aurobindo. We know to-day that the influence of suggestion upon mind and body are great, and a suggestion mostly act sub-consciously. The descent of the Overmind into the body of Aurobindo and similar other things were thus no better than auto-suggestions.

Aurobindo might be a victim of hallucination but the credulousness of his disciples was also awful. Thus they sought the confirmation of the Master's unusual subjective experience from the testimony of an outsider and a Western man at that. It is reported that on his return journey from the moon Charles Conard, an astronaut of Appolo 12, saw an inexplicable light "as big as Venus" flashing steadfastly from a point "down from Burma and east of India". According to the disciples of

Aurobindo, this must be the Supramental light of which the Master spoke.

As instances of the credulousness of Aurobindo's disciples, we may also mention that they felt for the first time attracted towards the Master because of his alleged miracle-making power—to earn the freedom of the country through spiritual power acquired by the yoga. So, as we have already seen, when India got independence in a peaceful way on the 15th August, 1947, they found a Divine hand in it because 15th August also happened to be the birthday of Aurobindo. It was further believed, as we have already seen, that behind the defeat of the Axis Powers in the last great War the *yogasakti* of Aurobindo worked in a subtle way. He is taken to have applied this force after the disaster for the Allied Powers at Dunkirk. And so far as Japan was concerned, he reportedly applied it after the fall of Pearl Harbour. Then when during the late sixties the Indo-China clash took place and when the victorious Chinese army after making a rapid advance turned back suddenly, the inmates of the Pondichery ashrama thought that it was the Mother (because Aurobindo died before) who had made the Chinese army retreat by applying her spiritual force. It is also amusing to know that those inmates came round to the belief that it is again Aurobindo who brought about the Russian Revolution through Lenin. It was also widely believed that as soon as the people entered the Pondichery ashrama, they became immortal.

As a matter of fact, the religious superstitions and intellectual backwardness of the people lacking faith in themselves constituted the base of the leadership of both Gandhi and Aurobindo alike. When coming to India Gandhi declared that he would bring the freedom of the country within one year, the Indian people came to believe him who was supposed to possess miracle-making power. It was also rumoured that British jails could not keep Gandhi confined within its four walls. Thus when he was clapped in jail, he was found meditating on a sea-beach, etc.

At different times Gandhi, "one of the hungriest men", resorted to fasting. We know that fasting has an element of

magic in it. Primitive people often fast in the belief that it increases food supply. In the Gandhian scheme of action fasting, however, has the effect of changing the heart of the opponent. But everytime Gandhi undertook a fast the vast majority of his countrymen was also emotionally involved with it. In connection with his fast of 1933 Nehru, his modern-minded political disciple, commented: "Again I watched the emotional upheaval in the country during the fast, and I wondered more and more if it was the right method of politics. It seemed to be sheer revivalism and *clear thinking had not a ghost of chance against it*. All India, or most of it, stared reverently at the Mahatma and expected him to perform miracle after miracle . . . and did precious little itself." (Italics ours).

By pandering to the religious prejudices of the people Gandhi soon became a Mahatma in their eyes. He wore a loin cloth, travelled "third" class and lived on fruit-justice and goat-milk. The hypocritical character of all these outward manifestations of saintlihood has been exposed by the caustic remarks of Sorojini Naidu that "it cost the nation much to keep Gandhiji poor". Even Gandhi's frequent use of such idioms as God, love and truth were also partly motivated because in Gandhi's opinion they "alone" moved our people. This attitude betrays not love, but contempt, for the people.

All his life Gandhi suffered from an obsession with sex. He was not only a hyper-sexual man, and his sex-urge did not leave him even at his fairly advanced age. It is now known that he also carried on a queer brahmacharya experiment with the stark-naked young lady inmates of his asram every night when he yelled and shivered from sex-excitement. This clashed with his religious sentiment which had taught him to regard sex as a sin. He was not also clear in his conscience about fighting capitalism with the money of the capitalists and hobnobbing with some of them. Because of these guilt-complexes Gandhi lived a prayerful life. But this too served to raise his stock with the people, and prayer was another device by which he sought to mobilise the people. Besides, whenever an occasion presented itself, lakhs of people fought one another to have his *darshan*. It is not however, Gandhi the ethical man but Gandhi the

half-naked mahatma supposed to have the miracle-making power which attracted them. The solitary voice of rationalism raised by Roy found only a faint echo in their minds.

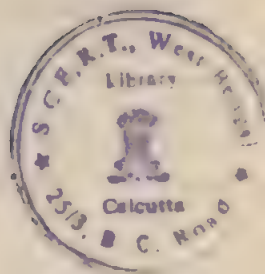
History thus repeated itself in the 20th century. The Vedantic camp achieved triumph over the rationalist one. In jail Roy was given the duty of plying a charka for some time. It drew forth a sarcastic remark from him: "I am learning to ply the divine spinning wheel with which Gandhi promises to save the world. It is an irony of fate that I should have to do this! The Mahatma has finally scored a point over me."¹⁰ The final victory of Gandhi (and Aurobindo) is, however, not symbolic. It is almost total. The Vedanta sealed the fate of the 20th-century Renaissance in the same way it has sealed the fate of the 19th-century Renaissance.¹¹

Many of the current ills of India stems from the fact that she rejected Roy and accepted Gandhi and Aurobindo as the mentors.

NOTES

1. The personal relationship between the sage of Pondichery and the saint of Sabarmati appear to have been very happy. As a prelude to his visit to the Pondichery asram Gandhi once sent an emissary. Aurobindo made to him some critical remarks about the Gandhian non-violence which is reported to have strained the relation between the two. And Gandhi's visit to the asram never materialised.
2. *Forbes's Positivism in Bengal*. See also the authors' article 'First Indian Humanists' in *Radical Humanist* for January 1975.
3. We thus find that in 1924 Roy began in his *Vanguard* a series subjecting the supramental philosophy of Aurobindo to a searching criticism. But he only contributed the first instalment and did not finish the series. It might be that Roy considered Aurobindoism merely to be of academic interest.
4. Aurobindo could not dismiss Roy lightly. In his evening talks he is found to have made occasional references to Roy. *Evening Talks* (Third Series), p. 223.
5. *Vanguard* dated 21st August 1924. The same article was reproduced in the same journal in January 1925. Also see *Communist Party Documents*, Vol. II, p. 397.
6. K. K. Saha's *Legacy of Roy in India* p. 253.

7. The letter is preserved in the M. N. Roy Archives at the Nehru Museum New Delhi.
8. The journal has been subsequently re-christened *Radical Humanist* as an organ of Roy's Radical Humanist movement. Sometime after his death the weekly has been converted into a monthly under the editorship of V. M. Tarkunde.
9. We come to know this inside story from Luxman Sastri Joshi who was the scriptural adviser of Mahatma and was present on the occasion in that inner-circle meeting. He subsequently defected to the Royist camp.
10. Roy's *Letters from Jail*, p. 13.
11. See the author's *Vedanta and Bengal Renaissance*.



APPENDIX—A

YOGA AND HUMAN ANATOMY

Published in the Radical Humanist, October 1979

Yoga has been adjudged as a unique contribution of the Hindus to the world spiritualist thought. Other nations too have made important contributions to metaphysics, philosophy and religion, but none has contributed anything like yoga, a system by which men's spiritual energy is supposed to be controlled and channelled in a particular way. The yoga doctrine is, however, based on a particular view of human anatomy and it stands or falls by this view.

In the West physiology has advanced mainly in response to the demands of medicine and surgery. With the progress of anatomical knowledge man started considering the purposes which the different parts of body might serve. Coming into daily contact with disease and functional disorders, medicinemen were stimulated to probe into the secrets of the body. All this has resulted in strengthening our present outlook on man as an animal organism. This was not liked by the contemporary leaders of the Western world who emphasised the divine character of man. That is why we find Boniface VII issuing in 1300 a Papal Bull in which he banned the dissection of human bodies on the ostensible ground that dissection would prevent the resurrection of a human body on the Day of Judgment. After conceding defeat to science on the material plane, the religious bigots tried to keep man and his world their closely guarded preserve.

The Papal Bull, however, had a discouraging effect for the time being. The practice of dissecting corpses was resumed with vengeance, as it were, when the Renaissance reinforced the spirit of enquiry and learning. Accordingly in 1505 a public dissection took place at the anatomical theatre of Santa Croce which the public was allowed to witness. Subsequently many such public

dissections of dead bodies took place, which made a tremendous contribution towards public education about human anatomy.

In India also we had a more or less similar beginning, but the end-result was different largely owing to the firmer grip the reactionary forces had over her cultural life. Ancient Hindus did develop a medical science of their own known as the Ayurveda (meaning science of longevity) which had a materialist commitment. This materialism might be somewhat naive, but what matters is *not* so much the *stage* of development of materialism as the *attitude* towards it. Some scholars are of the opinion that Hindu medicinemen were the first to make attempts towards the development of positive science in India. They tried to explain man and nature in terms of matter as they found it and proceeded on the assumption of the conversion of natural matter into body matter. All things in nature, according to them, are made of matter in five forms (*panchabhutas*)—matter in earth-form (*kshiti*), water-form (*ap*), fire-form (*teja*), air-form (*marut*), and ether-form (*byom*). Therefore, body-constituents have their ultimate source in natural matter existing in five forms, death being no more than the return of body-matter in its natural condition. We come across this comprehensive materialist view in the context of anatomical discussions.

The total pool of medical knowledge of a considerable number of ancient doctors of different periods is found in the *Charakosamhita*. It has a companion volume in the *Susruta-samhita*. The former deals with medicine and the latter with surgery. Unlike the *Charakosamhita* as we find it to-day, the *Susruta-samhita* is almost free from priestly bias. According to N. H. Keswani, a European critic, Susruta has "created an atmosphere of independent thinking and investigation, which later characterised the Greek medicine". We have the materialist Hindu conception of human anatomy from the *Susruta-samhita*.

In the *Rigveda* we find that the two physicians named Asvins were the most prominent deities next to Indra and Agni. There we find many accounts of their wonderful medical and surgical feats. But these accounts are rather mythological in nature and need not be taken seriously. Rudimentary medical knowledge

came much later.

G. S. Ghurye, an Indian sociologist, is of the opinion that by careful slaughtering of sacrificial animals the helpers at sacrifices knew well the anatomy of the animal body, and the taste thus cultivated led to the study of the anatomy of man. We find in the *Atharvaveda* a comprehensive description of the different parts of the human body "with some approach to accuracy and orderly arrangement". Among various magical beliefs and superstitions we thus find a hard core of empirical knowledge which indicates the beginning of medical science. The *Atharvaveda* has thus been rightly called the earliest medical book of India.

Naturally a hard core of medical knowledge is found among the magical beliefs of the *Atharvaveda* because magic itself is pseudo-scientific, and with all their limitations the early Vedic people had a healthy zest for life. Thus worldly affairs concerned them more than the other-worldly ones. But the tragedy of the Indian situation is that this healthy outlook did not last long, it having been reversed during the Upanisadic period. As we shall see, the Upanisads came to entertain an imaginary and fantastic view of the human body to suit the predilections of their fantastic, idealistic philosophy. *Atharvaveda* was disowned and denounced by their authors for its genuine medical content.

The medical tradition of the *Atharvaveda* found support mainly among Buddhists who had a more or less rationalistic view of the universe and who were primarily imbued with the idea of rendering service to suffering humanity. Medical science was thoroughly studied at the University of Nalanda. Buddhist kings founded hospitals for men (as well as beasts) and appointed physicians. We know that Charaka lived at the court of the Buddhist king Kaniska, and the great work of Susruta was recast by the Buddhist scholar Nagarjuna. Vagbhatta was another celebrated authority on surgery, and he too was a Buddhist.

On the authority of Ghurye we have already pointed out that in ancient India the sacrifice of animals led some of the inquisitive Hindus to dissect human bodies. They acquired a knowledge of the anatomy by direct observation of dissected corpses. In fact, the actual dissection of a corpse was thought

indispensable for medical students since it was the *only* way of directly observing the different organs *within* the body, and direct observation alone could ensure the ultimate reliability of our knowledge. The ancient Hindu surgeons had no less than 100 various instruments for practising operations of different kinds upon different parts of the body. It shows the sophistication Indian surgery reached at that time.

A corpse selected for dissection must not be maimed, nor decapacited due to old age or protracted disease and must not have died of poison. It means that the corpse should be one in good, natural condition. Care should also be taken that an uninitiated person did not mutilate it. Before dissection a medical student was therefore advised to practise it on certain fruits and dummies and thus acquire the technical skill needed.

After removing the excrement from the entrails, the body was left to decompose in the waters of a secluded and calm pool. After seven days when it was thoroughly decomposed, the student slowly scrapped off the skin with a whisk and carefully observed the different organs, both external and internal. Reliable knowledge of the human anatomy was thus acquired by comparing the accounts given in medical books with the results of direct personal observation.

There is also an epistemological aspect to ancient Indian medicine. Empirical data obtained by direct observation had to be processed through rigorous reasoning to give them the status of scientific laws. It was increasingly realised that perception alone was not sufficient to establish a causal connection between phenomena. For this it was necessary to supplement perception by inference. Ancient Hindu physicians were concerned mainly with two kinds of inference : (i) from cause to effect, and (ii) from effect to cause. Thus when they wanted to ascertain the factors causing a disease, they proceeded from effect to cause ; but when they prescribed certain drugs for curing the disease, they had to infer the effect from the cause, i.e., the administration of drugs. That is why we find in the *Charaka-samhita* a good deal of discussion on epistemology, and, according to S. N. Dasgupta, these epistemological discussions of physicians gave rise to "the logical speculations subsequently

codified in the *Nyaya-sutras*".

This rational and natural attitude of doctors, was, of course, not liked by the idealists. They took the counter-offensive on two fronts. Negatively, they pooh-poohed the medical profession and the world-view (including the view of the human body) upheld by the medical practitioners ; and positively, they began preaching an alternative world-view. Like Ayurveda, the idealist system of thought too looked upon man as a microcosm (*kshudra brahmanda*). It was believed that whatever existed in the outer universe existed in man as well. But while in Ayurveda this ultimate substance was matter, in the idealistic system it was taken to be a spiritual principle.

Coming to the idealist phase of the Vedic period, we find a surging contempt for medicine men and surgeons. The Upanisads set the tune, and the Hindu law-givers like Vasistha, Apastamba, Gautama, Manu and Vishnu carried on the tirade. For over a thousand years Hindu law-givers went on pouring contempt on medicine and its practitioners. The medical profession was condemned as a degraded profession because its practitioners had to move among the ordinary people. Besides, dead bodies were considered impure but physicians, while practising dissection, had to handle them. Opponents of medical science were also opposed to direct observation as the principal source of gaining knowledge. They attached far more importance to intuition and scriptural declaration.

It is now openly declared that the gods detest direct knowledge because they are fond of mysticism. Evidently an atmosphere was created in which scientific disciplines were discouraged and any semblance of interest in human anatomy proper was wiped out. Knowledge now ceased to be knowledge of the object. Instead it aspired to be knowledge of the subject himself which one could have only in a state of so-called *samadhi*.

The idealists therefore proceeded to produce not merely an alternative metaphysical view of the universe but also an alternative view of the human body conducive to their metaphysical standpoint but opposed to medical science. We know that some Kshatriya kings of the Kuru-Panchal region took the lead in con-

ceiving the Upanisads which have accordingly been characterised as royal learning. In the matter of conceiving an alternative view of the human anatomy we also find a royal sage named Varyovida in the forefront of a movement. We find from the *Charaka-samhita* a description of a seminar in which this metaphysically inclined king and some physicians participated. In the Ayurveda wind has been described as one of the constituents of the human body and excited wind as one of the three important elements giving rise to a disease. The physician-participants upheld this contention at the seminar. But rajarsi Varyovida did not consider it adequate. He propounded a deified view of wind as the ultimate reality. He held wind or *vayu* as the upholder of both structure and function in the body. Inside the body wind in five forms constituted its very soul, the five forms being *prana* (in-breathing), *apana* (out-breathing), *vyana* (interspiration occupying the interval between respirations), *udana* (up-breathing) and *samana* (all breathing). Outside the human body also *vayu* was the determining factor and did many a spectacular thing.

The Upanisads, as we know, are full of animistic beliefs in somewhat sublimated form. The belief in the Supreme Soul is one such sublimated animistic belief and another is the belief in the Wind. As is the case with other primitive races, soul is thought of among the Aryans as wind or breath. There was an ancient belief among different races that the soul was drawn into the body with the first breath at birth, and the nearest relative often caught the last breath of a dying man to ensure the continued existence of the spirit in the family. But despite this preoccupation with breathing, it must be admitted that no other race has paid so marked attention to the physical side of breathing and to the physical phenomena connected with it as did the early Hindus. It was widely believed among them that the practice of appropriately regulated breathing influenced both vital and mental activities and produced corresponding psychic results. The complete control of the vital breath was taken to bring it a mastery over all the forces that governed body and mind. These breathing exercises are called 'pranayam' or the science of breathing. The material human body was despised, and in the absence of any urge to know it, the philosophers of

the Upanisads were encouraged to think of the soul, its transmigration and other niceties connected with it.

Thus, in ancient India we had two rival views of human anatomy. One was the 'materialist' view embodied in the Ayurveda. The other was the 'idealist' view which, though popularised by Patanjali, was embedded initially in the Upanisads. It is largely based on fantastic imagination. The key concepts of their highly imaginary picture of the human anatomy like *kulakundalini*, *irha*, *pingala*, *susumna*, etc. have thus no factual basis.

We know to-day that the human body is composed of about one thousand billion cells, the organisation of which is both complex and efficient. Groups of similar cells compose the tissues among which we recognise as muscular, glandular, nervous and connective tissues. The tissues are closely bound together and nicely adjusted in their functions. The nervous tissues are meant to conduct impulses or messages from the external world and from one organ to another. They find mention even in the *Atharvaveda* which shows that the nerves as an anatomico-physiological element of the human body came to be known to the Aryan sages quite early. Then in the medical literature we find mention of 900 sinews and nerves and 700 veins in addition to other vessels and canals called *dhamani* and *srotas* and the trunk has been said to contain 15 organs such as the heart, the liver, the lungs, etc. The functions of these nerves and organs have been more or less correctly described. But in the Upanisads the significance of the nervous system of man was distorted, and a metaphysical theory of nerves was concocted in such principal Upanisads like the *Brihadaranyaka*, *Chhandogya*, *Katha* and *Taittiriya*. The *Prasna Upanisad* then combined the nerve-doctrines of these Upanisads and spoke of the distribution of the five *pranas* among the nerves. It particularly specified the nerve and the *prana* that can lead to salvation and clearly stated that if a man's life-breath can be made to depart through the nerve penetrating to the skull-structure, he is sure to achieve salvation. The state was thus set ready for the birth of yoga. The *merudanda* was now called the *Brahma-landa* and the *susumna* within this column the *Brahmanarhi*.

The Indian philosophical system developed in mutual interaction with one another. Much borrowing back and forth occurred, and it is in later times that the yoga system of thought attained its autonomy and was grafted on the Samkhya by Patanjali in his attempt to bring the latter within the Vedantic stream.

The Vedantists and neo-Vedantists felt chary of even touching a dead body, not to speak of dissecting it. So they had to take to fantasy in credence to their equally fantastic philosophy. It is true that *asanas* or physical postures have some therapeutic effect and that certain breathing exercises may increase the intake of oxygen. Similarly meditation may also help the easing of tension. But these are all incidental effects in which the yogis are not interested. They indulge in these exercises for their alleged metaphysical effect. Particularly the *ascetas* have hardly much relevance for the yoga practice, these being health-postures. The Yogis are interested in only one posture—a comfortable sitting posture known as the *padmasana*. In fact, the Hindus proved to be great adepts in various concentration—methods giving rise to hypnotic sleep (*samadhi*).

The fact that the Hindu system of yoga is based on an absolutely fictitious picture of the human body received its corroboration from no less a person than Swami Dayanand, the founder of the Arya Samaj. At one time he was a firm believer in yoga and actually practised it for a session in the desert of Chandi. The enthusiastic ascetic read also many works on yoga. But he soon began doubting the correctness of the account of the nervous system of man given there. While in this frame of mind, he happened to come across a corpse floating down the river. He dragged it ashore and began dissecting it "with a large knife". The test of actual comparison convinced him of the spurious character of the human anatomy described in those works on yoga. He tore them into pieces and flung them into the river with the mutilated corpse.

Before we conclude, we may draw attention to one thing more. The prejudice against the dissection of human bodies became so ingrained in the country that it was found to die hard even in the 19th century. The first Medical College on the European model was opened in Calcutta in June, 1835, and the

second course of lectures in the College commenced in October of the same year when dissection was introduced for the first time. Only one student named Madhusudan Gupta, a Vaidya (physician) by caste, "could bend his mind to the attempt" after "some exercise of the persuasive art". When Gupta came ready with his European professor, other students "strangely agitated with mingled feelings of curiosity and alarm" crowded after them but "durst not enter the building where this fearful deed was to be performed". Madhusudan's act was at that time hailed by firing a number of gun-shots from Fort William and his portrait was hung in the College building.

APPENDIX—B

M. N. ROY'S PLACE IN INDIAN TRADITION

Published in the Radical Humanist for April, 1975

It is wrongly believed that the Indian philosophical tradition is predominantly spiritualistic, and that the belief in God constitutes its most important element. In fact, ancient India must be credited with producing the most extensive atheistic and rationalistic literature in the world. The authors of this literature had advanced varied theories and arguments against the existence of God. Undoubtedly the most important of them which is pregnant with the possibilities was the *Svabhavavad* or the doctrine of nature. With this doctrine they could counter the *Isvaravad* or the doctrine of God very effectively.

Svabhavavad received its most characteristic treatment in the Samkhya philosophy which once enjoyed tremendous prestige in the country. According to this, primeval matter (*Prakriti*), moved by the laws of motion inherent in it (*Svabhava*), was quite sufficient to account for the being and becoming of the universe, and it was altogether unnecessary to assume the existence of God. In the beginning there was only one shapeless and all-pervading primeval matter which none created and none controls. As a result of evolution this homogeneous and undifferentiated mass became transformed into heterogeneous and determinate bodies. Atoms were formed out of them and their redistribution gave rise to the diverse material world. Matter was thus envisaged as eternal with motion as its characteristic mode of existence.

The Samkhya further conceived what is known as *Satkaryavad* or the doctrine of the identity of cause and effect. Since this doctrine required a basic similarity between cause and effect, the material *Prakriti* and not the immaterial God could be the cause of the material world. The universe was autodynamic and self-sufficient. Man with his intellectual and emotional

apparatus emerged at a certain stage of evolution. Primeval matter was found to have three constituents—inert mass (*tama*), energy (*raja*) and consciousness (*sattva*). These three elements not only coexisted but also cohered. They formed a unity in trinity. The universe was thus an orderly whole and had its own laws to obey. Everything that emerged out of it was also similarly constituted because of the basic identity between the material cause and its effect. The final form of an emergent thing depends on the predominant constituent. Man, too, has three constituents, his consciousness being the most important. The Samkhya philosophers thus visualised the continuity of phenomena bridging the gulf between the physical and the psychical.

Along with the Prakriti the Samkhya mentioned another eternal entity called Purusha. It is, however, not at all an active force and played no part in the origin and development of this world of multiplicity and plurality, it having evolved from Prakriti alone. The Purusha concept is thus entirely superfluous in the Samkhya philosophy. Its founder would have been more logical if he had not introduced it at all.

In spite of this flaw, it cannot be gainsaid that the *svabhava* *rad* of the Samkhya is scientific in spirit. And the scientific spirit, as we know to-day, is older than modern science. The latter only made the doctrine surer of itself. Drawinism, particularly, gave it powerful impetus. We cannot but marvel to-day that the Samkhyavadins had, so early in the history of human thought, formulated merely by philosophical insight certain propositions which are not much different from those made by modern scientists. In ancient India the scientific spirit rose in opposition to the mythological and theological explanation of phenomena.

Naturally the Samkhya, like the Lokayata became the target of attack from the champions of Vedic orthodoxy. Practically all its basic literature was destroyed by the latter. Besides Kapila, we find references to a number of post-Kapila teachers like Panchasikha, Asuri, Sanaka, Vudhu and Sivadada. But none of their treatises could be traced. Subsequently, Vedantist commentators like Vachaspati Mishra, Gaudapada, Aniruddha and Vijnanabikshu undertook to reconstruct the philosophy and

in the process they brought it in the pale of Vedantic thought-current with a shifting of emphasis. As a result, the Samkhya lost its distinctive character.

It is true that Buddhism was originally inspired by the Samkhya. Scarcely a century after Kapila, Buddha was born at Kapilavastu, the very place where the originator of the Samkhya system lived.* In those days the Nepal-Bihar region was still comparatively free from the influence of Vedic-Brahminism. So the earliest attempts could be made there to explain the mystery of the universe by means of reason. Trade is a source of heretical ideas, and Kapilavastu was an important trade and political centre on the great eastern trade-route which went north from Rajgir to the Nepal Terai. Buddha naturally caught up with many of the rationalist ideas of the Samkhya floating in the air in the region. But a more definite influence of the Samkhya upon him can also be traced from the fact that one of his early teachers Arada belonged to this school.

Even if Buddha obtained the principal tenets of his philosophy from the Samkhya, his interest was fundamentally different from that of Kapila. Buddha placed far more emphasis on ethics than on metaphysics. Ontological and epistemological questions therefore did not concern him much. The later disciples of Buddha, of course, could not remain aloof from metaphysical controversies. They saw that it was not easy to defend the teachings of the Master unless they clearly took an anti-theistic position. Hence different atheistic schools developed in course of time within the fold of the Buddhist movement. Many subtle and dialectical arguments were put forward to disprove the existence of God. But not much attention was paid to the doctrine of nature. And if the doctrine had no mooring in Buddhism, its future became completely bleak after its fall which signified the virtual termination of the rationalist phase of Indian thought. The Brahminical reaction then came to acquire a complete hold

*As a matter of fact, the town itself derived its name from the association of Kapila with it. From a Pali source we come to know that the four sons of an Ikshaku king driven into exile by their father at the instance of his concubine, halted at a place near the hermitage of Kapila and built a city on a piece of land given by him. The city was then named Kapilavastu after the name of the sage.

over the Indian mind, and the original Samkhya tradition no longer had a chance of survival.

Centuries after, M. N. Roy revived that tradition. Basically his philosophy of New Humanism is the Samkhya doctrine of nature enriched by modern science. Roy took up the threads where the Samkhyavadins left. The latter established that this universe is autodynamic because it has *raja* or energy as one of its constituents and that it is also self-sufficient. Roy went a step further and concluded that born out of this law-governed universe man too is self-sufficient and autodynamic. It means that man has inherited from nature all the basic *gunas* which he needs for making his own destiny. According to Roy, these *gunas* are three in number –urge for freedom, rationality and morality. The instinct of self-preservation in nature has become with man, its highest product, an urge for freedom. The determinism of nature has taken the shape of rationality in the case of man, and the harmony of nature that of morality. This attempt by Roy to explain man is again a new application of the Samkhya principle of *Satkaryavad*. If for getting inspiration for his dialectical thinking Marx “once again returned to the mode of contemplation of the great founders of the Greek philosophy”, Roy returned to the mode of contemplation of one of the great founders of Indian philosophy for inspiration after cutting adrift from the anchor of Marxism. In his philosophy of New Humanism Roy has sought to coordinate the knowledge so far accumulated in the different departments of science, and to present a unified picture of the being and becoming of man in the light of that knowledge. The gaps in this knowledge he tried to fill on the basis of the ancient Samkhya doctrine. In that sense, Roy is our modern Kapila.

APPENDIX—C

RADICAL HUMANISM, MARXISM AND SVABHAVAVAD

*Portion of an article published in the Radical Humanist
for September 1981*

M. N. Roy salvaged and revived the lost naturalistic tradition of ancient India. This tradition had got lost in a dark age and Roy took up the torch from where it was left and carried it further.

Science has indeed become *the* world-view now, and it is a unitary view—a single picture of the whole of nature including man. The naturalistic outlook is also the scientific outlook. So wherever naturalistic ideas germinated in Indian philosophy, proto-scientific ideas were present. Our ancient naturalists too, as we have already seen, took a unified view of the world. The philosophy of Radical Humanism thus derives, to a considerable extent, from the ancient Indian doctrine of *svabhavavad* enriched by modern scientific knowledge and characterised by a greater emphasis upon human activities.

The Samkhya argued that the universe is auto-dynamic since it has *raja* or energy as one of its constituent elements, and the two other sister philosophical system e. g. Nyaya-Vaisesika and Lokayata, also professed their faith in the auto-dynamism of matter. This rare philosophical insight of our remote forefathers has received eventual support from modern science. The progress of mechanics in the 17th century has made the mechanistic mode of explanation (i.e., explanation in terms of matter and motion) particularly plausible.

As against mechanistic materialism Marx has advocated dialectical materialism. The latter is, however, based not on a study of the material process. Rather it derives its rationale from a logical process enunciated by an arch-reactionary idealist philosopher of the world. Marx accepted Hegel's *priori* logic as a mode of reaching the truth though he turned the dialectic

"right side up". The metaphysics of Marx thus hardly owes anything to science. Following the dialectical logic he has come to the conclusion that motion in matter can be explained only on the basis of the law of opposites. But the law hardly explains anything because the two opposites of an entity cannot interact unless they are *already* endowed with a capacity for motion and move towards each other. Roy, however, like the ancient Hindu materialists, visualised a unified and self-sufficient universe with no scope for the operation of any transcendental force.

Dialectical materialism has not only a theory of motion. it has also a theory of transformation which seeks to account for the birth of new qualities and things. But, like Marx's law of motion, his law of transformation too explains nothing. This law has been enunciated by Marx thus : The increase of quantity gives rise to a new quality, and he has sought to illustrate it by such examples as the transformation of water into steam with the increase of temperature and into ice with the decrease of temperature. But here we should note that in the transformation of water what increases quantitatively is heat but what is transformed qualitatively is not heat but water. The same logic applies also to the case of the transformation of water into ice. Roy has therefore eschewed the Marxian law of transformation and veered round the Samkhya doctrine of *sakamavad* as supplemented by the Nyaya-Vaiseshika and Lokayata doctrine of *arambhavat*. The two doctrines taken together come to mean that a new quality is nothing but the effect of its cause on a higher plane. In the parlance of modern scientists this phenomenon is known as mutation. Roy depended upon the scientific theory of mutation to account for the emergence of a new quality.

In common with the Samkhya and allied system of thought, Radical Humanism contends that born out of the law-bound self-sufficient universe man, the highest evolved product of nature, is also self-sufficient and he has inherited from nature all his basic *guna*-s, which he needs for making his destiny. The *guna*-s enumerated by the Samkhya are too archaic for our modern purpose. Roy has given a modern version of them--urge for freedom, rationality and morality. The instinct of self-preservation in nature has become with man an urge for freedom.

The determinism of nature has taken the shape of rationality in the case of man and the harmony of nature accompanied by the law of gravitation has expressed itself in man as his moral and ethical sense. This attempt on the part of Roy to explain is a new application of the Samkhya principle of *satkaryavad*.

Like the ancient *svabhavavadins*, Roy also rejected the law of karma and the theory of rebirth. Further, he accepted no sacrosanct authority and stood on the same ground with the ancient logicians when he acknowledged that the test of logic and reasoning accompanied by direct observation and verification is the only test which an idea must pass to acquire validity.

Roy has, however, supplied what our ancient materialist schools almost completely lacked. It is a secular ideal of freedom as the goal of human life— an ideal consistent with his animal ancestry. The potentialities of lower animals are exhausted by their struggle for existence, and their level of existence is determined accordingly. But man is a higher animal and as such his potentialities are also greater. Man's struggle for existence is thus carried on a correspondingly higher plane. He wants to be progressively freed from the restrictions upon the unfoldment of his potentialities, his urge for freedom being only a continuation of his biological struggle for existence on a higher plane.

Thus starting from a physico-biological basis Roy formulated an ethical goal for human life which is not, however, completely divorced from the ancient *svabhavavadi* tradition. He has only developed upon the *bhogavad* (doctrine of pleasure) of the Lokayatists. But the latter spoke solely in terms of physical pleasures whereas Roy has focussed attention mainly on the higher pleasures of life— pleasures derived from the pursuit of such values as truth, beauty and morality. The Lokayatists further denied class-distinction and emphasised human brotherhood. They did not subscribe to the view that values must have a kind of character different from the ordinary activity of life. And in all these respects Roy stood almost on the same ground with the Lokayatists.

The *svabhavavad* of our ancient materialists has thus reached its culmination and found fulfilment in Roy. His Radical Huma-

nism is therefore not something alien to the Indian tradition. In fact, it is the positive outcome and a modernised version of thousand years of the development of the Indian materialist thought eventually frustrated and swallowed by the Vedanta. Radical Humanism is thus modern Indian materialism.

APPENDIX—D

SOCIOLOGY OF PARTYLESS DEMOCRACY

Published in the Radical Humanist for May, 1983

HUMANISM is primarily a man-centred philosophy. It advocates a scientific view of life as an alternative to the theistic view of the universe. This mission of humanists is urgent enough not to be distracted by the vicissitudes of party politics. But this does not mean that they should have no political commitment. They must at least work for the betterment of human society, their focus being the people not in the collective sense but in the distributive sense meaning a collection of individual men and women. What it means is that humanism is committed to the democratic values of a free and open society. Its rational pursuit of truths, when applied to the political field, gives rise to the concept of partyless democracy. Democracy is indeed stronger to the extent to which the people unite freely for common action.

The concept of partyless democracy as applied humanism is not, however, a sudden brain-wave of M.N. Roy. The concept has a history behind it. In course of the last century a group of "humanist" sociologists of America cooperated to evolve it. The idea has now reached its culmination in Roy. By advocating partyless democracy Roy has thus parted from his moorings in the European political thought and came within the purview of an important American intellectual tradition.

The party system was viewed with disfavour in the U. S. almost since its inception. President George Washington (1732-1799) made a scathing criticism of the developing party system in America in his Farewell Address delivered on 17th September, 1796. His experience for eight years in office led him to reach this conclusion. The political parties were also denounced by John Taylor of Caroline (1753-1854) who served for two years in the Virginia House of Delegates and for six years in the U. .

Senate. The attack was continued by John C. Calhoun (1782-1850), an active participant in public life. Political leaders like John Adams (1735-1826) and James Madison (1751-1836) also joined this attack.

The denunciation of the party system by these busy political leaders was, however, almost wholly empirical. They made no historical study of the system and did not bother themselves at all with the question how modern democracy could be practised without political parties. Rather they mostly regarded these parties as necessary evils.

It is a group of American sociologists who subsequently came to conceive the idea of partyless democracy as "the coming new order". According to them, institutions are the objectification of man's past accomplishments, and his further progress depends upon a break from the existing position. Human progress must therefore begin "in a revolt against institutions".

Henry D. Lloyd who founded the "humanist" school of American sociology in 1870's made a historical study of the party system to find out its relevance for the modern society. In his book *Man the Social Creator* Lloyd argued that the American political theory was born of a reaction against the absolutism of the 17th and 18th centuries, and the American party system owed its origin to the revolutionary movement against that absolutism to give some sort of organisation to the factions in revolt. But since the conditions have now changed, the party politics is more or less an anachronism. Today competition and irrationalism are to be eradicated not only from the economic, but also from the political sphere. What is therefore needed in modern politics is peace and cooperation and not to "put the discharge of duties of vital public importance into the hands of passion, prejudice, whim and trimming". Despite its initial destructiveness, modern communication has created the institutional basis of a cooperative commonwealth based on mutual understanding and sympathy mainly through the new means of transportation and communication.

Lloyd, however, declared that to complete the process "new departures must need a new philosophy". The concept of partyless co-operative commonwealth must therefore have its

own philosopher "the historian of humanity, the philosopher of the true society, who will discover to men how great is the extent to which they are living love".

When Lloyd died in 1903, no great philosopher had yet arisen in response to his clarion call. After his death the thread of his work was, however, taken up by Herbert Croly. He himself was, of course, not an original philosopher but he swore loyalty to the ideas of Comte's secular Religion of Humanity.

Auguste Comte, as we know, was a child of the French Enlightenment. He pitted man against God and was a Humanist in that sense. He was also concerned with the moral and political improvement of man. But he did not visualise any cooperative commonwealth based on rational cooperation and mutual love. The harrowing experience of the French Revolution made Comte rather conservative in outlook. His writings thus betrayed an anti-liberal tone. This tone was also not missing from the early writings of Croly. At this stage he pinned his faith in leadership. In his *The Promise of American Life* published in 1909 he expounded his theory of progress through leadership. But he soon outgrew this limitation, and his emphasis on discipline and imitation came to be replaced by that on freedom and participation in his second book. He now accepted the idea of a natural community where all men are to be raised to a level of participation in society—an equalitarian and partyless community bound together by a spirit of human brotherhood. Croly wrote: "Just in so far as a group of really democratic political institutions are created, the foundations of the American two-party system are undermined. The two parties seek to accomplish for a democratic electorate certain purposes *which such an electorate ought to accomplish for itself* (Italics ours)."

Industrialism has destroyed the old internal solidarity of society, it being to-day no more than a mere conglomeration of individuals. Neighbours are only nigh-dweller. As a result, the general body of people has been rendered quite helpless against the organised small groups of sectional interests. Under the circumstances the state which is the only organisation universal in scope has a great potentiality as a cohesive force. Croly prescribed that since there would be no political parties

under the new order, the state-legislature should be elected by the various interest groups operating in society. This is likely to result in the discussion of an issue from different angles. It would also be instrumental in the formation of constantly changing majorities.

Croly was further of opinion that the people must not hand over the "complete general power" to the legislature and should have the power to recall. It is because Croly did not view democracy so much as a machinery as the expression of the sovereign will of the people "towards the pursuit of an ideal purpose". This purpose has to be evolved out of the selfish and individualistic aspect of human nature through the blending of individual wills into a community.

Here it would also be pertinent to note that both Lloyd and Croly subscribed to the theory of human nature as enunciated by a group of "progressive" social psychologists headed by James Baldwin. In the words of Baldwin, "man is not two, an ego and an alter, each of which is in active and chronic protest against a third great thing, society". He was of opinion that the existing imperfections in human nature are not the result of a dichotomy in it—higher and lower. Selfishness and similar other evils are the outcome of the unfinished state of social evolution. Baldwin missed no opportunity to emphasise the interdependent character of the relationship between the individual and the society. A separate individual and a society regarded as something apart from individuals—both are abstractions. "The real thing is Human Life, which may be considered either in an individual aspect or in a social", said Cooley, one of the close disciples of Baldwin.

The Baldwin group of social psychologists has also woven a particular theory of progress. Man is an evolved product of nature and natural evolution has been instrumental in creating social impulses in him because it helped his survival. At present man has reached the culminating stage of the evolutionary process. So he must try now to fulfil his potentialities by creating society of rational cooperation.

Croly has harnessed this "progressive" psychological theory of Baldwin and Cooley to his sociology of partyless democracy.

and the latter can be fully understood only in the light of his moral presupposition. In fact, Croly's scheme of partyless democracy is to be viewed as a part of a moral reconstruction of society. What he wanted is that after being conscious of human potentialities rational men would assert themselves to remodel their present institutions to make possible their complete development.

Thus we see that Croly started with Comte's Religion of Humanity. As a theory of human sovereignty and human brotherhood it was all right. But in spite of the fact that Comte stood for the reorganisation of society according to scientific principles, he could not establish himself as a radical thinker of institutional growth because of his excessive attachment for traditions and the conservative strain in his character. So Croly had to temper his positivist ideas with those of the "progressive" group of American social psychologists. He could thus largely anticipate Radical Humanism. Each social philosophy has its characteristic political organisation. If parliamentary democracy is the appropriate political organisation of the liberals, partyless democracy is that of the humanists of different persuasions.

II

In course of the second half of the 19th century Comte's Religion of Humanity made a great impact upon a section of the Indian mind, particularly in the Bengal region, as a result of which a strong Positivist movement grew here. A number of talented Bengali intellectuals were attracted towards it.

But the character of the Comtean impact was largely vitiated here because it came in a colonial setting. Naturally the Indian Positivists were drawn towards the developing nationalist movement. Some of them made sustained efforts to organise the Indian National Congress and its first President, W. C. Bonnerjee, was a Positivist hailing from Bengal. The national feeling drove the Indian Positivists towards glorifying India's past. After the premature death of Justice Dwaraka Nath Mitra, Jogendro Chandra Ghose came to the leadership of the Positivist move-

ment of this country. He sought to make his fellow Positivists "modernise" the Hindu society through traditional forms. This gave birth to what has come to be known as Hindu-Positivism.

Comte, as we know, is also the father of the science of sociology. He proclaimed that human society, like nature, is law-governed. These laws have to be discovered, and the future development of society has to be planned accordingly. In his follow-up Jogendro then added that the Indian society does not operate in obedience to the same laws as govern its Western counterpart because of the difference in historical experiences. That is why he went forward to study caste and joint family systems in terms of their functionality and thus laid the basis of Indian sociology.

The Indian disciples of Comte did not think it advisable to explore the potentialities of man and thus enrich the democratic thought. Rather, taking a clue from one or two stray remarks of Comte, they looked forward to the regeneration of the Brahmin caste for the upliftment of the Indian society.

We have already seen how a group of American sociologists, drawing inspiration from the father of sociology, ultimately came to outgrow this socio-political conservatism and made a good deal of political thinking to move the society in the humanistic direction. In contrast, the early Indian sociologists of India reinforced the conservative and authoritarian aspect of Comte's thought instead of outgrowing it although they were not also altogether unconcerned with the Indian progress.

It is M.N. Roy who has made up the loophole of the Indian sociologists of humanist persuasion living in the preceding century by upholding the concept of partyless politics. Indeed, his concept of organised partyless democracy based on people's committees is even a definite improvement upon the concept of interest-based partyless democracy of American sociologists. One stands for territorial representation and the other for functional representation. Election by persons and not interests is implied in democracy both by the principle of *popular* control of legislatures and by that of the equality of voting. Interests cannot be measured while persons can be counted. Besides, interests cut across and find expression through popular elections.

Partyless democracy may still appear to be a far cry. But this should not deter us from championing its cause. We must not forget that the utopia of to-day is the reality of tomorrow, and, as has been contended by Charles Reich in his *The Greening of America*, the emerging revolution could change the political structure "only as its final fact".

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. *Original Writings :*

- a) Works of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother ;
- b) Works of Mahatma Gandhi ;
- c) Works of M. N. Roy.

2.a) *Works on Aurobindo :*

- Banerjee, S. K.—Sri Aurobindo and Future of Man : a study in synthesis
- Chatterjee, P. C —Gandhi and Aurobindo
- Chatterjee, Priti Bhushan—Towards Supermanhood ; the philosophy of Sri Aurobindo
- Chatterjee, Tulsidas—Sri Aurobindo's Integral Yoga
- Chaudhury, Haridas—Sri Aurobindo, the Prophet of Life Divine (Pondichery, 1960)
- Chaudhury, Haridas & Frederic Spiegelberg- The Philosophy of Sri Aurobindo (London, 1960)
- Cooq, R. P. Lela —The Radical Thinkers : Heidegger and Sri Aurobindo (Pondichery, 1972)
- Diwakar, R. R. —Mahayogi Sri Aurobindo (Bombay, 1967)
- Feys, Jan—The Yogi and the Mystic
- Gandhi, Kishor—Contemporary Relevance of Sri Aurobindo (Delhi, 1973)
- Gandhi, Kishor Social Philosophy of Sri Aurobindo and the New Age (Pondichery, 1965)
- Ghosh, Sisir Kumar—Sri Aurobindo, Poet and Social Thinker (Karnatak. 1973)
- Gokak, V. K. -Sri Aurobindo, Seer and Poet
- Goswami, Chittaranjan -The Soul-culture in the Upanisad in the light of Sri Aurobindo's thought (Pondichery, 1971)
- Gupta, Nalinikanta— Sri Aurobindo and His Ashram (Pondichery, 1948)
- Iyengar, K. R. Srinivas Sri Aurobindo : A biography and a history (Pondichery, 1972)

Keshavmurti—Sri Aurobindo, the hope of man (Pondichery, 1969)

Maitra, S. K.—An Introduction to the Philosophy of Sri Aurobindo (Benares, 1941)

Maitra, S. K.—Studies in Sri Aurobindo's Philosophy (Benares, 1945)

McDermott, Robert (ed)—The Essential Aurobindo (New York, 1973)

Minor, Robert Neil—Sri Aurobindo : The Perfect and the Good (Calcutta, 1978)

Mitra, Sisirkumar—The Liberator : Sri Aurobindo, India and the World (Bombay, 1970)

Nirodbaran Talks with Sri Aurobindo (Pondichery, 1966)

Pearson, Nathaniel—Sri Aurobindo and the Soul Quest of Man (London, 1952)

Purani, A. B.—Sri Aurobindo's Life Divine (Pondichery, 1966)

Purani, A. B.—The Life of Sri Aurobindo (Pondichery, 1960)

Roy, Anilbaran (ed) The Message of the Gita as interpreted by Sri Aurobindo (London, 1946)

Roy, Dilipkumar—Sri Aurobindo came to me (Bombay, 1964)

Saint-Hilaire, P. B.—The Message of Sri Aurobindo and His Ashram (Pondichery, 1947)

Satprem Sri Aurobindo or the Adventure of Consciousness (Pondichery, 1968)

Varma, Vishwanath Prasad—The Political Philosophy of Sri Aurobindo (Bombay, 1960)

b) *Works on Gandhi :*

Agarwal, Shriman Narayan—Gandhian Constitution for Free India (Allahabad, 1946)

Alexander, Horace, et. al—Social and Political Ideas of Mahatma Gandhi (New Delhi, 1949)

Ash, Geoffrey—Gandhi (New York, 1968)

Bandopadhyaya, Jayantanuja—Social and Political Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi (Bombay, 1969)

Bhattacharyya, Buddhadeva—Evolution of the Political Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi (Calcutta, 1969)

- Birla, G. D.—*In the Shadow of the Mahatma : A Personal Memoir* (Bombay, 1968)
- Bondurant, Joan V.—*Conquest of Violence : The Gandhian Philosophy of Conflict* (New Jersey, 1953)
- Bose, Nirmal Kumar—*Studies in Gandhism* (Calcutta, 1947)
- Bright, J. S.—*Himalayan Blunders of Mahatma Gandhi* (Lahore, 1945)
- Brown, Judith Margaret—*Gandhi and Civil Disobedience : the Mahatma in Indian Politics, 1928-1934* (Cambridge, 1977)
- Brown, Judith Margaret—*Gandhi's Rise to Power : Indian Politics, 1915-1922* (Cambridge, 1972)
- Buch, M. A.—*Rise and Growth of Indian Nationalism : Non-Violent Nationalism Gandhi and his School* (Baroda, 1939)
- Dandavate, Madhu—*Marx and Gandhi* (Bombay)
- Diwakar, R. R. —*Is not Gandhi the Answer ?* (Bombay, 1966)
- Doctor, Adi H.—*A Probe into the Gandhian Concept of Ahimsa* (Calcutta, 1962)
- Erikson, E. H.—*Gandhi's Truth : The Origins of Militant Non-violence* (New York, 1969)
- Fisher, Louis—*Gandhi and Stalin : Two Signs at the World's Cross* (Delhi, 1977)
- Fisher, Louis—*The Life of Mahatma Gandhi* (New York, 1950)
- Gora—*An Atheist with Gandhi* (Ahmedabad, 1955)
- Gupta, S. S.—*The Economic Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi* (Delhi, 1968)
- Jaju, S. K. D.—*The Ideology of the Charkha* (Kathi, 1958)
- Jha, S. N.—*A Critical Study of Gandhian Economic Thought* (Agra, 1955)
- Jones, E. Stanley—*Mahatma Gandhi : an interpretation* (New York, 1948)
- Kar, P. C.—*Romantic Gandhi* (Calcutta, 1933)
- Kripalani, J. B.—*Gandhian Thought* (Chandigarh, 1964)
- Kripalani, J. B.—*The Latest Fad, Basic Education* (Wardha, 1948)
- Kumarappa, J. C.—*Gandhian Economy and Other Essays* (Wardha, 1948)

- Lahiry, Ashutosh—Gandhi in Indian Politics: A Critical Review (Calcutta, 1976)
- Louis Fisher - The Life of Mahatma Gandhi, Part II
- Mashruwala, K. G.—Gandhi and Marx (Ahmedabad, 1956)
- Pyarelal, Nair—Mahatma Gandhi : The Early Phase (Ahmedabad, 1965)
- Mahatma Gandhi : The Last Phase (Ahmedabad, 1958)
- Rajendra Prasad—At the Feet of Mahatma Gandhi
- Rattan, Ram -Gandhi's Concept of Political Obligation (Calcutta, 1972)
- Rivett, Kenneth- Economic Thought of Mahatma Gandhi (Bombay, 1959)
- Rolland, Romain- Mahatma Gandhi : Studies in Indian Nationalism
- Sharma, B. S. — Gandhi as a Political Thinker (Allahabad, 1956)
- Spratt, Philip- Gandhism : An Analysis (1939)
- Tendulkar, D. G.--Mahatma : Life of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (Bombay, 1951-1954)
- Varma, V. P. The Political Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi and Sarvodaya (Agra, 1965)
- Verma, I. B. Basic Education : A Re-interpretation (Agra, 1969)
- Yajnik, Indulal K. - Gandhi as I know him (Delhi, 1940)
- Zinkin, Taya- The Story of Gandhi (1965)
- c) *Works on M. N. Roy :*
- Adhikari, G (ed) - Documents of the History of the Communist Party of India Vols I and II (New Delhi, 1971 & 1974)
- Bhattacharjee, G P. Evolution of Political Philosophy of M. N. Roy (Calcutta, 1971)
- M. N. Roy and Radical Humanism (Bombay, 1961)
- Bhattacharya, Nirmal Chandra- Social and Political Ideas of M. N. Roy (Biman Behari Majumdar Memorial Lectures, Calcutta Asiatic Society, 1980)
- Chakravarti, P. B --M. N. Roy : The Radical Humanist (Calcutta)

- Das, Swadesh Ranjan Manabendra Nath : *Jiban O' Darshan (in Bengali, Calcutta, 1965)*
- Das Gupta, B. N.—M. N. Roy : *Quest for Freedom (Calcutta, n. d.)*
- Dhar, Nirranjan—*The Political Thought of M. N. Roy, 1936-1954 (Calcutta, 1966)*
- Ganguly, Sourindra Mohon—*Leftism in India : M. N. Roy and Indian Politics, 1920-1948 (Calcutta, 1985)*
- Ghosh, Sankar—*Socialism and Communism in India (New Delhi, n. d.)*
- Grover, D. C.—M. N. Roy : *A Study of Revolution and Reason (Calcutta, 1973)*
- Haithecox, J. P.—*Communism and Nationalism in India : M. N. Roy and Comintern Policy (Bombay, 1971)*
- Hindi, A. K. (Tayab Shaikh)—*M. N. Roy : The Man Who Looked Ahead (Allahabad, 1933)*
- Jena, Krishnachandra—*Contributions of M. N. Roy to Political Philosophy (New Delhi, n. d.)*
- Karnik, V B.—*M N. Roy : Political Biography (Bombay, 1978)*
- Kaye, Cecil—*Communism in India (Delhi, 1926)*
- North, C. Robert & Eudin Xenia I—*M. N. Roy's Mission to China (Stanford University, U. S. A., 1963)*
- Overstreet, Gune D. & Windmiller Marshall—*Communism in India (Berkeley, 1960)*
- Petrie, D.—*Communism in India, 1924-1927 (Calcutta, 1927)*
- Raichoudhury, Satyabrata—*Leftist Movements in India (Calcutta, 1976)*
- Roy, Dipti—*Leftist Politics in India : M. N. Roy and Radical Democratic Party (Calcutta— in press)*
- Roy, Ellen—*Radical Democracy (Lucknow, 1944)*
- and Ray, Sibnarayan—*In man's Own Image (Calcutta, 1945)*
- Roy, Samaren—*The Restless Brahmin : Early Life of M. N. Roy (Calcutta, 1970)*
- Roy, Samaren—*Manabendranath O Antaratik Communism (in Bengali—Calcutta, 1984)*
- Ray, Sibnarayan—*M. N. Roy : Philosopher Revolutionary (Calcutta, 1980)*

- Ray, Sibnarayan—Radicalism (Calcutta)
- Saxena, Kiran—Modern Indian Political Thought : Gandhism and Roy's New Humanism (New Delhi, 1978)
- Sengupta, Shyamadhan—Contemporary Philosophy of Humanism (Kanchrapara)
- Schram, Stuart R. and d' Encausse Helene Carrere—Marxism and Asia : An Introduction with Readings (London, 1969)
- Sharma, B. S — Radical Humanism of M. N. Roy (Delhi, 1965)
- Shivaiah, M.—New Humanism and Democratic Politics (Bombay, 1977)
- Spratt, Philip—Blowing Up India (Calcutta, 1955)
- Tarkunde, V. M.—Radical Humanism (New Delhi, 1983)
- Verma, V.P.—Modern Indian Political Thought (Agra, 1961)
- Wadia, J. B. H.—M. N. Roy : The Man (Bombay, 1983)

3. *Some General Works :*

- Abel, Reuben—Man is the Measure
- Adamany, David W. and Agree, George E.—Political Money
- Alexander, Herbert E.—Money in Politics
- Ames, E. S.—The Psychology of Religious Experience
- Aron, Raymond—Democracy and Totalitarianism
- Barber, Benjamin—Superman and Common men
- Behanan, K. T.—Yoga : A scientific evolution
- Bernard, Murchand—The Age of Alienation
- Cantril, Hadley and Rumstead, Charles M.—Reflections on the Human Venture
- Carovillano, R. L. and Shekhan, J. W.—Science and the Future of Man
- Carrel, Alexis—Man, the unknown
- Chaitanya, Krishna—The Sociology of Freedom
- Clark, Kenneth B.—Pathos of Power
- Coe, G. A.—The Psychology of Religion
- Cooley, Charles Horton—Social Organisation
- Cuzzort, R.P.—Humanity and Modern Sociological Thought
- Dahl, Robert A.—After the Revolution : Authority in a Good Society
- Dahl, Robert and Tufte, Edward R.—Size and Democracy

- Davenport, R. W.—The Dignity of Man
- D'Angelo, Edward—The Problem of Freedom and
Determinism
- Dhar, Niranjan—i) Vedanta and Bengal Renaissance
ii) Fundamentals of Social Education
- Douglas, Jack D.—The Technological Threat
- Dubos, Rene—i) So Human an Animal ; ii) A God Within
- Durkheim, Emile—On Morality and Society
- Fiske, John—Through Nature to God
- Forbes, G. H.—Positivism in Bengal
- Friedman, Maurice—The Hidden Human Image
- Foster, E. M.—The Machine Stops
- Fromm, Erich—i) The Sane Society ; ii) Man for Himself
- Gabor, Dennis—The Mature Society
- Gillet, E. H.—God in Human Thought
- Hancock, Roger N.—Twentieth Century Ethics
- Hazlitt, Henry—The Foundation of Morality
- Huxley, Aldous—Science, Liberty and Peace
- Huxley, Julian—The Human Frame
- Huxley, T. H.—Evolution
- Jaffa, Henry V.—The Conditions of Freedom
- Jefferson, Thomas—The Writings of Thomas Jefferson
- Kalelkar, Kaka—To a Gandhian Capitalist
- Kinsky, V.—Dwarfing of Man
- Kohen, Carl—Civil Disobedience
- Lasky, H. J.—Democracy in Crisis
- Lecky, W. E. H.—History of the Rise and Influence of the
Spirit of Rationalism in Europe
- Leuba, J. H.—A Psychological Study of Religion : its origin,
function and future
- Lindberg, Leon N.—Politics and the Future of Industrial
Society
- Lindblom, Charles E.—The Intelligence of Democracy
- Lloyd, Alfred H.—Dynamic Idealism
- Maddonald, Dwight—The Root is Man
- Mansel, Louis and Sacks, Paul M. (ed)—The Future of
Political Parties
- Macliff, Annamayi De Wali—Images of Man

- Montagu, Ashley—The Direction of Human Development
 Maritain, Jacques—Man and the State
 MacGovern, W. M.—From Luther to Hitler
 Moore, C. A. (ed)—Essays in East-West Philosophy
 Narain, Jayaprakash—From Socialism to Sarvodaya
 Narla, V. R.—Gods, Goblins and Man
 Neville, Robert C.—The Cosmology of Freedom
 Nisbet, Robert A.—The Sociological Tradition
 Pendergast, Richard J—Cosmos
 Potter, Karl H.—Presuppositions of Indian Philosophies
 Potter, David M.—People of Plenty
 Radcliff, J. Lucien—Roots of Totalitarianism
 Revel, Jean-Francois—Without Marx or Jesus
 Riepe, Dale—The Natural Tradition of Indian Thought
 Sharma, Arvind—Thresholds in Hindu Buddhist Studies
 Shourie, Arun—Hinduism : Essence and Consequences
 Storer, Moris B. (ed)—Humanist Ethics : Dialogue on Basics
 Taylor, E. B.—Primitive Culture
 Toulmin, Stephen—An Examination of the place of Reason
 in Ethics
 Upton, C. B.—Bases of Religious Belief
 Vanek, Joroslav—The Participatory Economy
 Veblen, T.—Theory of Leisure Class
 Waddington, C. H.—The Ethical Animal
 Welzer, Maickael—Obligations : Essays on Disobedience,
 War and Citizenship
 Weiss, Paul—The God We Seek
 William Cenkner—Hindu Personality in Education : Tagore,
 Gandhi and Aurobindo
 White, Morton and Lucia—The Intellectual versus the City
 Zashin, Elliot M.—Civil Disobedience and Democracy

4. *Journals and Periodicals :*

Arya

Gandhi Marg

Harijan

Humanist Way (Formerly *Marxian Way*)

Radical Humanist (Formerly *Independent India*)

Interdiscipline

Young India

INDEX

- Alienation 12, 13, 123
- Alternative leadership 6
- Applied science: Reorientation to 121-122, 124
- Apurva* 32
- Arya Samaj 33
- Athens 11
- Aurobindo 1-4, 8, 13 137, 138, 140, emphasises *chit* aspect 27; looks forward to the descent of the Super-mind 30-31; views yoga as conscious evolution 31; enunciates a theory of integral yoga 31-34; on the existence of evil 34-36, 40; inflicts a double injury on man 39; views history as a progressive projection of the Divine 63-66; advocates spiritualising social sciences and institutions 69-82; propagates a spiritual religion of humanity 129-130.
- Ayurveda 131
- Badarayana 15
- Baker 127 fn.
- Bakunin 93
- Bande Mataram 2
- Bazaz, Jamnalal 90
- Bengal Positivism 2
- Bhagwad Gita*: and Gandhism 23-26, 83, 84 87, 116
- Birla, G. D. 90
- Boer War 92
- Bourgeoisie 4; and modern technology 8-10
- Bose, Subhas Chandra 136
- Brahmacharya* 78-79
- Bread labour 87
- British Parliamentary system 114
- Buddhism 131, 132
- Calvin 26
- Carlyle 1
- Carpenter 84
- Champaran 100
- Chhandogya Upanisad 47
- Chit* 27
- Christ, Jesus 81
- City 98, 119
- Communism 74, 91, 115
- Communist International 5
- Comte, Auguste 132
- Consciousness see *Chit*
- Constituent Assembly 5, 135
- Cooperation 63, 122-123
- Dantwala 90
- Darwin 28-29, 68 fn. see also evolution
- Dayananda 33
- Decentralisation 122
- Decolonisation 5-6, 99, 100
- Dialectic materialism 43
- Draft constitution 6
- Dunkirk 32, 138
- Einstein 42
- Epicurean view of life 118
- Evolution 28 31, 36-37, 52 see also Darwin
- Farming as a way of life 119
- Fascism 6, 74, 98, 128

- France 36
 Freedom struggle 1-6
 French Enlightenment 132
 French Revolution 135
 Fromm, Erich 19
 Frydman, Maurice 88
 Fundamental Rights 126
 Galileo 81
 Gandhi 1, 4, 5, 8, 13, 137-140 ;
 and Vedanta 15 ; emphasises
 Sat aspect 14-19 ; denounces
 direct democracy 113-114 ;
 on Ahimsa 18-19, and Bhaga-
 wad Gita 23-26 ; on law of
 Karma 21 ; on inner voice 22 ;
 on divine determinism 66-68 ;
 on party system 114 ; on inter-
 nationalism 129 ; on trustee-
 ship 89-91 ; on education 97 ;
 on Satyagraha 99-101 ; on
 confrontation with Roy 130 ;
 views history as progress to-
 wards ahimsa 66-67 ; taking
 an ethical view of economics
 83-84 ; opposes modern tech-
 nology 84-87 ; plays the role
 of a king-maker 96 ; dimini-
 shes man 97-102 ; stands for
 village democracy and opposes
 city life 91-96, 98
 Green Revolution 124
 Happiness 53, 104
 Hind Swaraj 89
 Humanism 132, 133
 Huxley, Aldous 11
 Ideal of Human Unity 68 fn , 70
 Illumined Mind 50
 Independent India 136
 Indian National Congress 5, 98,
 114, 133
 Inner theocracy 79
 Inner voice 22
 Institutions : man's control over
 9-13, 68-69
 Integral yoga : as distinguished
 from traditional yoga 31
 Intermediate technology 121, 122
 Internationalism 128-130
 Intuitive mind 30
 Isopanishad 89
 Isavavadi school 15
 Jaiprakash 127 fn.
 Jefferson 89, 101
 Jyotir vidya 131
 Karakahini 31, 33
 Kingdom of God 84
 Law of gravitation 49
 Law of repulsion 50
 League of Nations 128
 Lenin 5, 32, 138
 Liberalism 80
 Life Divine 70
 Locke 41, 42
 Loka Sevak Sangha 114
 Lokasamgraha 24
 Lokayata 27
 Magic 32
 Man : and institutions 8-12, 14 ;
 as a transitional being 28,
 30, as a self-sufficient being
 44-55 ; lonelines of 53, 74 ;
 sovereignty of 133 ; as the
 measure 121, 132
 Manusmriti 98
 Marx, Karl 93
 Mexico 131
 Morality 23-26, 34-36, 47-50
 Mother (The) 36
 Muladhar 33
 Nationalism 10, 11, 128-130

- Naturalistic tradition see *svabhava-vadi* school
- Nehru, Jawaharlal 96, 135, 136, 139
- New Humanism 42, 133
- Newton 29, 41, 42
- Non-violent Movement see *Passive Resistance*
- Northcliffe 82
- Nyaya 131
- Ocultism 32, 36
- Overmind 30, 137
- Parliament 1
- Passive resistance 2, 4, 99-102, 117-118
- Partyless democracy 108 112, 114, 126 fn., 127 fn.
- Patanjali 31, 32
- Peoples Committees 113-115, 125
- Peoples Plan 6
- Plato 79, 116
- Pondichery 33, 118, 137, 138
- Pope 1
- Prajnananda 32
- Prasad, Rajendra 135
- Prayer 21, 135
- Protagoras 132
- Pyarelal 60, 89, 90
- Quit India Movement 100
- Radical Humanism 116 see also *New Humanism*
- Rammohan 23, 131
- Rationality 37, 45-47, 134
- Reason see *Rationality*
- Reason, Romanticism and Revolution* 57, 127 fn.
- Reformation 133
- Religion of Humanity 76
- Renaissance 113, 126, 132-134, 136, 137, 140, 142
- Renaissance Institute 134
- Rita 19, 85
- Roy, Ellen 127 fn.
- Roy, M. N. 1, 5-6, 8, 13, 17; on *New Physics* 41-44; explains man as a self-sufficient being 44-47; traces human morality to rationalism 47-50; on human will 50-54; on role of human ideas 58-62; on direct democracy 106-114; pleads for qualitative control in democracy 115-116; emphasises the role of detached individuals 116-117; stands for an alternative technology 119-126; on nationalism 124; on inter-nationalism 128-129; on cooperative economy 122-125; on confrontation with Gandhi and Aurobindo 130-140
- Ruskin 84
- Russian Soviets 114-115
- Sachhidananda 15, 27-30, 33, 35, 37, 39
- Saint-Simon 8
- Samkara 15
- Samkhya 131
- Sarvodaya 91, 114
- Savonarola 81
- Second Chamber 115
- Self-management 12, 123
- Shanti Sena 129
- Social engineering 68, 81
- Social sciences 76-78
- Socrates 68 fn.
- South Africa 4
- Sorokin, Pitrim A 77
- Superman 28, 36-41
- Supermind 30, 31, 82, 137
- Svabhavavadi school 15, 130, 132
- Swadeshi movement 2, 3, 118
- Swaraj 84

Synthesis of yoga 70

Taittiriya Upanishad 29, 30

Tantra 32, 34

Technology 9-11

Theory of Probability 51

Theory of Relativity 43

Thoreau 84, 92

Thucydides 80

Tilak 24

Tolstoy 84

Tool 9

Transfer of Power 4-6, 95, 99, 100
124, 128

Trusteeship 79-80, 124

Tychism 50

United Nations Organisation 76,
128, 129

Upanisad 14, 16, 84 see also
Vedanta

Vaiseshika 131

Varnashram dharma 25, 87, 94

Vedanta 14, 15, 23, 29, 31, 84,
131, 140 see also Upanisads

Village Kingdom 93, 96, 98

Vivekananda 24, 131

Will 50-53, 124

World government 129

World War : First 4, 5, 93 Second
4, 6, 32, 39

Yoga 3, 24, 32

anasakti 116

bhakti 36

hata 32

Jnana 36

karma 116

raja 33, 34



MINERVA TITLES OF ABIDING INTEREST

Other Minerva titles on Aurobindo, Gandhi and Roy

199.54

DHA

SRI AUROBINDO—The Perfect and the Good by R. N. Minor . . .

GANDHI VS JINNAH—An analysis of the debate over the Partition of India by Allen H. Merriam Rs. 60

GANDHI'S CONCEPT OF POLITICAL OBLIGATION by Ram Rattan Rs. 40

LEFTISM IN INDIA—M. N. ROY AND INDIAN POLITICS 1920-48 by Sourindra M. Ganguly Rs. 150

M. N. ROY—Revolution and Reason in Indian Politics by D. C. Grover Rs. 30

Some Recent Titles

LIFE AND CULTURE IN ORISSA by Benode S. Das (ed) Rs. 100

HINDU INFLUENCE ON GREEK PHILOSOPHY by T. J. Lomperis Rs. 50

BRUTON'S VISIT TO LORD JAGANNATHA 350 YEARS AGO by P. T. Nair (ed) Rs. 75

UNDER DEVELOPMENT, STATE AND MODE OF PRODUCTION IN BANGLADESH by Hasanuzzaman Chowdhury Rs. 75

INDIA AND KAMPUCHEA by Tridib Chakraborty Rs. 65

U. S.—BANGLADESH RELATIONS 1971-81 by Jayasree Biswas Rs. 50

In Press :

BEYOND MARXISM, LIBERALISM AND ULTRA-NATIONALISM—World Civilisation through the Ages by O. K. Ghosh

LEFTIST POLITICS IN INDIA—M. N. Roy and Radical Democratic Party by Dipti K. Roy

WOMEN'S MOVEMENT AND WOMEN'S ASSOCIATIONS IN ANDHRA PRADESH 1860-1973 by Malladi Subbamma

MINERVA ASSOCIATES (PUBLICATIONS) PVT. LTD.

7-B, Lake Place : Calcutta-700 029

INDIA